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THE  
PULPIT COMMENTARY,

EDITED BY THE  
VERY REV. H. D. M. SPENCE, D.D.,  
DEAN OF GLOUCESTER;

AND BY THE  
REV. JOSEPH S. EXELL, M.A.

WITH  
INTRODUCTIONS

BY THE  
VEN. ARCHDEACON F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.—RT. REV. H. COTTERILL, D.D., F.R.S.E.  
VERY REV. PRINCIPAL J. TULLOCH, D.D.—REV. CANON G. RAWLINSON, M.A.  
REV. A. PLUMMER, M.A., D.D.

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY  
NEW YORK AND TORONTO.





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THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

*Introduction and Exposition:*

BY REV. H. R. REYNOLDS, D.D.,  
PRESIDENT AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, CHESHUNT COLLEGE; FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE, LONDON.

*Homiletics:*

BY REV. PROF. T. CROSKERY, D.D.,  
LATE PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, MAGEE COLLEGE, LONDONDERRY.

*Homilies by Various Authors:*

REV. PROF. J. R. THOMSON, M.A.  
REV. D. YOUNG, B.A.

REV. B. THOMAS.  
REV. GEORGE BROWN B.A.

*VOL. I.*

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY  
NEW YORK AND TORONTO.

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# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE STUDY OF THE

# GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

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### I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

1. **EVOLUTION** throws light on a myriad phenomena, but around each of them there stretches a measureless circumference of impenetrable darkness. Science, with all its methods, is perfectly powerless to bridge the abyss between "nothing" and "something;" between eternal "stillness" and "motion;" between non-living "things" and "life;" between "physical phenomena" and "mental impressions;" between "logical processes" and "real inspirations."

We are face to face with mysteries everywhere, but our great men furnish our profoundest problems. The science of their antecedents and their environment does not solve these problems. Criticism may show that some peculiarities which we thought unique have been noticed elsewhere; but the greatest men issue from the furnace of historical inquiry unscathed and inexplicable.

We are quite ready to concede that some of the great "figures" of history, who to our unassisted gaze have seemed like stars apart, when covered by the object-glass of the modern telescopic inquirer are resolved into clusters of stars. The Greek Sesostris thus becomes, on close inquiry, several Pharaohs rolled into one. The doubtful dignity assigned to Aristotle in mediæval legend, and the incongruous functions attributed to Virgil, have been discredited by criticism. Mists have gathered round the personality of Buddha, of Zerdusht, and Mohammed, which the higher criticism has done much to pierce. We do not deny that there are composite characters even in the sacred history, who, when closely examined, lose some of the mythical adornment with which they have been invested by the piety of three thousand years.

2. What is true of men is also true of their work. The 'Analects' of Confucius are now known not to have been the sole product of his brain. No one dares attribute all the discourses of Buddha to his own lips. We cannot regard all the Hebrew Psalter as the work of *David*, and many cautious scholars treat the visions of *Isaiah* as a collection of oracles issuing at different periods from the prophetic heart of Israel.

Notwithstanding these concessions, we know that some men and some work defy the critical analysis. The more we know of some men so much the greater becomes their wondrous personality. The blending of apparently contradictory elements is so complete that they cannot be analyzed or torn asunder; e.g. our own Alfred comes out at last from the crucible, minstrel and king, theologian and lawgiver, warrior and saint.

There are, moreover, certain works which, though they represent the age in which they were produced, and many lines of antecedent thought, yet are so dominated by the creative energies of master minds that they cannot be regarded as the patchwork of many brains and remote ages. This conclusion may present its own peculiar difficulty, but, instead of sacrificing a great man or a unique work at the shrine of psychologic

law, we have either to modify our notion of the law in order to take in this new case, or else to allow that it passes beyond our law altogether.

3. Now we have before us here a unique work and a presumed author. The more the Fourth Gospel has been focussed in the light of criticism, the more convinced do we become that it is the work of *one* extraordinary mind. We cannot tear it to pieces and say, "This paragraph belongs to one decade, and that to another; this to Jerusalem, and that to Alexandria; this to Galilee, and that to Ephesus." Whenever or by whomsoever this Gospel was produced, it was fashioned by one strangely gifted man. On this the bulk of critics are agreed.

The question, then, arises—Is it a record, or is it a dream? Is it the testimony of an eye-witness and ear-witness to certain events, or is it the speculation of a philosopher concerning some analogous events? Is it a page of biography, or is it the artistic clothing of an idea? Is it of priceless value as the outpouring on the ear of an intimate friend of the inner life and consciousness of One whom the writer did not hesitate to call the incarnate Word of God, or is it the poetic and artistic exposition of a reverence which knew no bounds, but did not hesitate to create facts and imagine teachings in harmony with such a subtle and stupendous idea as that of the Son of God who had taken a perfect humanity up into his own consciousness?

Answers have been given in the affirmative to each of these alternatives. The problem, however, is further complicated because the presumed author is almost certainly proven to be the author of another work of strangely different character. The style, motive, mental position, and attitude of the Apocalyptic seer of Patmos seem widely diverse from those of the disciple whom Jesus loved. If he who saw the Lord on the Lake of Galilee, and heard his dying cry upon the cross, beheld him afterwards in the midst of the throne of God, his experience was momentous and unique; and if the same eyes that looked into the soul of Jesus till they saw the heavenly Father there, also saw in vision the small and great, the quick and dead, come to his eternal judgment; if he who described the washing of the disciples' feet actually penned the fall of "Babylon the Great;"—then in this "author" we have one of the most astounding phenomena in the history of humanity. His character, functions, and powers, by their spread, their compass, and their intensity, become almost as wonderful a presentment to our thought as that of the great theme of all his meditations. The personality of John become almost as great a puzzle to scientific history as the personality of Jesus.

Modern methods of determining authorship or of repudiating authorship had not been completed when the sublime personality of "John the divine" took possession of the Christian consciousness. The early ages were uncritical; yet they were not blind to the difficulties involved in recognizing the unity of the author of the Fourth Gospel and of the Apocalypse. Some of these lie upon the surface, and we find that Dionysius of Alexandria, in a passage preserved by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' vii. 10, 24, 25), felt as keenly as any modern critic does the contrasts of method, style, theme, that the two documents offer to a cursory gaze (see section VII. 5. (4) of these prolegomena). Yet these scepticisms took no serious hold upon the mind of Christendom. Where they were most acutely realized the shadow of doubt fell rather upon the Apocalypse than upon the Gospel.

4. The striking difference, however, between the Divine theme of the Gospel and Epistles on the one side, and that of the world-conquering Prince of the kings of the earth on the other, is mysteriously confirmed by the traditions which have gathered round the venerable name of John. Thus Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 28) tells us that John was to the close of his life a man of fiery enthusiasm and severe judgment on those that blasphemed and resisted the authority of the Lord; for once, "having entered a bath to wash, but ascertaining that Cerinthus was within, he leaped out of the place and fled from the door, not enduring to enter under the same roof with him, and exhorted those with him to do the same, saying, 'Let us flee, lest the bath fall in, as long as Cerinthus, that enemy of the truth, is within'" (cf. here 1 and 2 Epistles of John). Here is the Boanerges who would call down fire from heaven upon those Samaritans who were unmindful of their obligations to the Saviour of the world; and here also is the author of the visions of the Apocalypse. But tradition also preserved the exquisite feature of character which induced him to say on all occasions to those who gathered round him, "Little children, love one another; if you do this, all is done."

Clemens Alexandrinus preserved a story which he declares is no fiction, but a veritable fact (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' iii. 23), which blends the apostle of love with the enthusiasm against wrong, and helps one to feel the reality of the nature, composite though it might be, which could have produced the two most wonderful books in the world.

5. For sixteen hundred years every sentence attributed to him was searched and compared with every other sentence or trait which had floated down the ages, and these had fitted themselves each to each, so that one of the sublimest ideals of human life sat upon the verge of time, and held in hand the veil which hides the deepest things of God and of eternity from mortal gaze. Devotion and insight felt that *because* John had seen the family at Bethany, and had witnessed the beginnings of faith in Samaria, he was not unlikely to wish to call down fire from heaven upon those Samaritans who would not receive the Christ—whom himself loved with silent passion—when he came on earth to claim his own. Historic imagination realized that he who had seen the Lamb in the midst of the throne was not unlikely to have recorded among his earliest memories the trumpet-cry of the Baptist, or the adoring exclamations of Nathanael, of Peter, and of Thomas. The synoptic Gospels as well as the Fourth Gospel are all alike pervaded by the august but silent presence of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

During sixteen hundred years the Apocalyptist and the author of the Fourth Gospel were believed mutually to explain and complement one another. The eagle flew through the *expanse of heaven on double pinion borne*.

"Sed Joannes, alā binā  
Caritatis, aquilinā  
Formā fertur in divina  
Puriori lumine,"

said Adam of St. Victor; and in still more striking words, blending the two lines of John's experience and character, he sang in memorable words—

"Volat avis sine metā  
Quo nec vates nec propheta  
Evolavit altius;  
Tam implenda. quam impleta,  
Nunquam vidit tot secreta  
Purus homo purius."

6. The incompatibilities of tradition and of authorship were easily solved by the unique experiences of this mighty spirit. If it were true that John listened to the heart of Jesus and heard the pulsations of eternal love, looked also into the unseen and saw the visions of God, theoretical difficulties vanish. Concede the facts as they stand, and there is no psychological or historical problem awaiting our anxious solution. But, on the other hand, if, as many modern critics tell us, the supernatural be incredible; if the Incarnation be a delusion; if inspiration and the vision of unseen things be unthinkable; if Christ did not raise Lazarus from the dead, nor offer the intercessory prayer, but was only supposed to have done so; if the Transfiguration were a dream, and the agony in the garden a nightmare; if the Syrian sun still looks on the unknown grave of the Crucified; if no new commencement of our humanity began on that Easter morning; if the entire story of the Resurrection, of Pentecost, and Patmos be pure fiction of even pious minds; then I am free to confess the literary problem is most perplexing. If the Fourth Gospel be a theological romance, or a poetical prose drama of a philosophical mind intent on pressing certain conclusions on a hostile school of thought; if the Epistles are ecclesiastical treatises, and are arranged to produce some carefully calculated results entirely different from their *primā facie* significance; and if the Apocalypse be a rhetorical manifesto, a political cryptogram, a poem of one who deliberately chose this apocalyptic method of presenting his ideas;—then the critics may be right. The same mind, out of the depths of its own moral self-consciousness, without any facts to rest upon or any visions to help it, never did produce the two documents. Then the few references in the synoptic Gospels to the supposed writer need not refer either to the author of the Fourth Gospel or to the author of the Apocalypse. The problem is then insoluble. We should have nothing wherewith to account for the obvious literary phenomena *except* the unfathomable consciousness of an unknown

individual. If the Fourth Gospel be nothing but an invention, a subjective creation, without historic basis or conviction; and if the Apocalypse be a political manifesto, and answers to no objective revelation;—then the authorship of the two documents, notwithstanding remarkable coincidences between them, cannot be referred to one and the same individual.

7. Let us, for the sake of argument, suppose, however, that the Christ of the synoptic Gospels is an objective reality, and that the fisherman John (a near relative of Jesus) was one of his earliest disciples; that he *did* come into the closest intimacy with his Master, saw his greatest signs of power, his deepest humiliation, his tragic death; that John was one of the witnesses of his resurrection; that he saw his Master assume a new humanity, the same, yet not the same, and in that supernal vesture of his Divine majesty ascend into the heavens and vanish in the light. Let us suppose that this reticent but yet passionately loving man became from that moment profoundly impressed with the belief that the Divine Spirit which was in his Lord came forth from heaven, and, by its mighty working, did produce a new and sacred fellowship which, as the months and years rolled on, became the most notable fact to him, and was obviously bidding fair to move, to change, to revolutionize, the whole world. If this were so, there is no difficulty in the supposition that he who had shone upon the dazzled eyes of the disciples with a glory surpassing that of the sun should, at some subsequent epoch in the apostle's life, when the new society had been suffering from grievous failures and cruel persecution, have favoured him with veritable assurances that his Master was indeed the "Prince of the kings of the earth," the "Lamb in the midst of the throne," the human but Divine Lord of all men, and the Consummator of the kingdom of God. On that supposition it is clear that a series of Divine and awful communications *might* be made to him, that these would be the symbolic clothing of great principles of providential rule, by which the old theocracy would merge eventually into a heavenly and eternal rule over all the kingdoms of men, over all forces visible and invisible; and definitely reveal, to him at least, the Eternal Now into which he calls all souls that believe his Word and have life through his Name.

Let us suppose that John described what it was given him to see, and uttered and wrote what had been spoken to him with a voice loud as the sound of many waters; that the heavens were veritably opened to him; that he saw the glory of God and the city of God; that he beheld in vision the judgments and the battle, the victory and the abiding blessedness, of the saints of God. The experiences through which he passed before these visions dazzled him had been unique and wonderful. He must have witnessed the marvellous rise of the Christian Church irresistibly forming itself into a visible and spiritual power, not only in Judaism, but embracing a multitude that no man could number, of every country, kindred, and tribe. The troubles of Jerusalem and Antioch and Ephesus must have entered into his soul. He must, on any hypothesis, have lived through the fall of Jerusalem, and suffered persecution of a bitter kind, a lifelong martyrdom; but he cherished an invincible faith in the ultimate triumph of the Christ. Apart from the great place which he himself took in the order of the Church and the creation of Christian ideas, we know that there were hundreds of thousands of men and women who believed in the Lord Jesus, and were ready to die rather than forego their loyal trust, not in a new method of life, but in the living, reigning Christ—the Man who was appointed to judge the world. Untold multitudes praised him, and were ready to confide in him as the Saviour of mankind, to imitate what they knew of the manner of his life, to eat his flesh and drink his blood, to take up his cross and follow him.

Through him Jews and Gentiles had access to the Father by the one Spirit which he, their Lord, had given (Eph. ii. 18). Christ was the Power of God to the Jew, and the Wisdom of God to the Greek (1 Cor. i. 24). From Jerusalem to Rome men were praying in the name of the Lord Jesus, and saying, "Our Father . . . thy will be done, thy kingdom come, as in heaven so on earth" (Luke xi. 2). The Beatitudes and the parables and the deeds of mercy wrought by Jesus were passing like watchwords from lip to lip. Such words as the following were among the divinest and the most sacred: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; and neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him;" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 27, 28). The word



of Christ dwelt in men richly in all spiritual understanding (Col. iii. 16). They remembered his word that it was "more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35). Ritualism and externality in religion were vanishing before the remembrance that he was "Lord of the sabbath" and "greater than the temple," that his interpretation of the sabbath had emancipated men from the letter. The ministration of the Spirit, of righteousness, and of life was more glorious to men in Corinth and Philippi than the ministration of death (2 Cor. iii. 7, etc.). The Christ's death was the offering of the true Paschal Lamb (1 Cor. v. 7); and circumcision was regarded as the symbol only, not the reality, of religious life (Rom. ii. 25). Faith in Christ made men of different nationalities fellow-heirs of a great inheritance. Because Christ had been raised from the dead, them also who sleep in Jesus would God bring in triumph. Those who believed would not be baffled by death; they would be "for ever with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 14). The intimate mystic fellowship between the glorified Lord and those who were united to him by "like precious faith" was set forth in wonderful imagery, and was read of eagerly by Corinthians, Ephesians, and Romans. Christ was the Head, they were the members of his body (1 Cor. xii. 12, 27). Christ was the Husband, and the Church was his bride (Eph. v. 23). Christ was the Tree of life, into which the branches broken off might be engrafted (Rom. xi. 24). All kinds of metaphors were used to indicate what he had done for humanity. Christ was currently believed to be the Foundation of the true temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 11; Eph. ii. 20); the Substance (body), of which the Jewish sabbath and ritual were the shadows (Col. ii. 17). He was "the End of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 4). "He died, rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord both of dead and living" (Rom. xiv. 9). He was set forth as a Propitiation (Rom. iii. 25). God's righteousness by faith was declared in the blood of Christ. He was a great Intercessor, realizing the very ideal of prayer (Rom. viii. 34). He had appeared in the presence of God for us. He would judge the world. There was no condemnation for those who were in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 1). He would overcome death and hell. He would save all men. He would consummate the kingdom. All things should be subjected to him. He would deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God might be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 22—28, 57).

In this brief outline of dominant and widely circulated ideas about Jesus, the main substance of which is drawn from uncontested authorities, we are often led, irrespective of the documents attributed to John, to ask in wonder and with trembling—*Where and whence did these ideas arise?* Notwithstanding all the search that has been made in Jewish literature, either in the sacred or apocryphal books, or in the Targums or Mishna or Gemaras, in classical or Oriental sources, or in Alexandrine theosophy or logosophy, we can find nothing sufficient to account for the profoundly rooted sentiments, the mutually understood commonplaces of the Christian faith, which appear to lie between the lines of almost every verse of the four undisputed Epistles, to say nothing of the rest of the Epistles of Paul, and of Peter, James, and Jude, and the writer to the Hebrews.

The profundity and compass of these ideas contrast very forcibly with the prevailing sentiment in the *end* of the first century or throughout the second century. We find, in the writings of the apostolic Fathers and apologists, much practical teaching, crude allegory, underlying suggestions of ecclesiastical platform, or of passionate desire for martyrdom, and the hint of much dreary controversy with active or incipient Gnosticism. A stream of gracious and ethical teaching flows apparently at the *side* of these writers. They made abundant use of the Old Testament, and they also quote from nearly all the books of the New Testament; but they differ from both in a manner truly surprising. There are no springs of living water bursting and bubbling through their words. Often when we sink a shaft into their verbose and wearisome iterations, the indications of some life-spring that we trusted might gush forth runs off and escapes us.

8. Some potent cause must account for the strength of spiritual life, the novelty and abundance of religious ideas and hopes, which confront us in the pages of the New Testament itself. The air we breathe braces our moral nature, and is intensely practical; but we cannot but feel the close nearness of the eternal world, a constant occupation of men's minds with the idea of salvation from sin and of reconciliation with God, the sense of union through Christ with the Father, large conceptions of

humanity and of the Church, the realized presence of the Holy Spirit, a continual reference to Christ—to his character, to his death, and his blood, his resurrection, and ascension, his second advent, and the judgment of quick and dead. *Now, if Christ be a reality*, if the story of the synoptic Gospels can be trusted, very much is explained. The generation was living which had received from the lips of Jesus his own idea of himself, and had been face to face with God manifest in flesh. The sifting, burning words of the Master himself, circulating from home to home, from Church to Church—the living word of the Christ, the revelations made by him—were the life of the apostolic community. Men were eating this manna which came down from heaven. St. Paul's Epistles are admitted to be the earliest fragments of what we call the New Testament; but they most obviously are built up on mutually accredited ideas—on the "word of the truth of the gospel," which had spread with the rapidity of a prairie fire from Galilee to Antioch, from Galatia to Ephesus, from Babylon to Corinth, from Alexandria and Athens to Rome. Men, not "filled with new wine," but saturated with the Spirit, were then moving from land to land; wheresoever they went they proclaimed the word, the royal majesty, the saving might, of the Lord Jesus Christ. According to our narratives, "John" was one of the pillars of the Church (Gal. ii. 9), and was closely identified with Peter in the earliest victories of Christianity. He was one of the first preachers of the gospel of Christ; and his memories of the Master contributed at least to the views which St. Paul entertained of the Person and ministry, the death and resurrection, of the Lord Jesus Christ, the powers of faith, the functions of love, and the relation between the body of Christ and its spiritual and exalted Head.

May we not make the supposition that Jesus *did* speak to Nicodemus, to the Samaritaness, to the Jews, to the Galileans, to the chief rulers, to the Greeks, to the company of the eleven, as the Fourth Gospel reports of him? Is it inconceivable and incredible that he who did, according to synoptic tradition, speak of himself as having the destiny of all men and nations in his hands, should also have said on another occasion that "the Father hath given all judgment into his hands;" that he who called upon all men to "repent," should have described the Divine side of this great human experience as a regeneration by the Spirit; that he who raised other dead may have raised Lazarus from the grave; that he who said, "Come unto me," should also have said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"? Is not the astounding group and body of convictions concerning the place and power of the Lord Jesus best explained by the *fact* (not the mere supposition) that Jesus claimed a pre-existent glory with the Father, that he was one with the Father, and would be lifted up that he might draw all men to himself? Are not many events in the final week of the Lord's life best explained by the additional facts referred to by the fourth evangelist? Is it not rational to suppose that some at least of the disciples perceived the blending of the Divine and human in the perfect life of their Lord, and felt overpowered by the greatness of his condescension and the unutterable sweetness of his sympathy? Without going into further details, let us for the sake of argument make the supposition that the eternal Son of God, who had been always the Life and Light of the world, did actually become man upon earth, and, by reason of his resurrection from the dead, became, as Paul said, "the first-fruits of them that sleep," and "was declared with power to be the Son of God;" that this was not a mere after-thought, a dream of St. Paul, or a dogma of an Alexandrine sophist in the second century, but a positive event, which enacted itself in the life of Jesus;—then what more likely than that a disciple whom Jesus loved should have retained memories of his words and deeds which, when brought together in later years should have justified him in producing the proem of the Gospel? The supposition is that this same disciple should also have seen visions and dreamed dreams of Christ's supernal splendour of power and rule, which justified and deepened his own older memories. These memories prepared him for the final conception of the place filled in the universe by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that conception enabled him to fall back upon the earthly manifestations of love and of power by which he had been brought into the fellowship of the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The *assumption of the occurrence of the facts* dissipates all difficulty about the unity of the man John. The fact that he had insight enough to receive and retain the discourses of Jesus, and the fact that he saw the fulness of grace and truth, the glory of the only begotten Son, in the humanity of Jesus, are consonant with another fact in

his experience, that he should see the Shepherd of Israel, and the slain Lamb, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah open the book and loose its seals, and declare that, as "the King of kings and Lord of lords," bearing the name of "The Word of God," he should cast down all that resists his supreme power, and fulfil all the sublime hopes which were breathed in the solemn hush of the upper chamber.

9. Critical difficulties of a literary kind, arising from some of the peculiarities of the several documents, do in our opinion largely depend on the *a priori* supposition that such facts as these are incredible and unthinkable. The supposed impossibility of the Incarnation, the fancied incredibility of the Resurrection, and the consequent rejection of all events which are not in harmony with physical and psychologic laws of nature and man, compel the critics to find some explanation of the mysterious and puzzling phenomena which these documents reveal. If the unreality of both groups of facts be a foregone conclusion, the Gospel is a romance and the Apocalypse a dream; and such a romance and such a dream could scarcely have been fashioned in the same brain.

On the other hand, the admission of such facts, or the absence even of any prejudice against their possibility, reduces this discrepancy to very small limits.

If it was the beloved disciple who has given us this *résumé* of his deepest religious experience, then the evidence becomes almost irresistible that Jesus is the Son of God. If Jesus did say and do the things herein recorded, then everything in the universe, every event in time, every fact in the history of the world, is affected by it.

10. *The Christian faith is not dependent upon the Gospel of John.* All the strenuous, wonderful ministry and correspondence of St. Paul were completed thirty (perhaps forty) years before this Gospel saw the light. The Churches of Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome were founded and grew to great importance without having read the conversation with Nicodemus or the valedictory discourse. "The faith of Christ the Lord of glory" prevailed in the synagogues of Judæa, as we may reasonably argue from the encyclical letter of James the Just, the servant and brother of Jesus. Judas also, the brother of James, taught his fellow-disciples to "keep themselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." The Christian Church existed, and was the scene of anxious controversy, developing a new form of human society and a new code of ethics. This society was linked by subtle bands of common faith and hope; it was troubled by unauthorized intruders; it was consecrated by the blood of many martyrs; it possessed a "faith once for all delivered to the saints," before the Fourth Gospel was indited. Christianity is not dependent upon it. The existence of this faith in a potent form, so subtle that it abashed philosophy and sapped the foundations of idolatry and honeycombed the Græco-Roman world, and did so before this document saw the light, is one of the best-attested facts of past history. The spread, the force, the vitality, of the Christian community, even in the days when the Epistle to Romans was written (say A.D. 58), is forced upon our minds by a perusal of any half-dozen verses of the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, or Corinthians. The bare lines themselves bring a supernatural fact under our very eyes. That a born Jew should have preached in Corinth and Thessalonica the supreme majesty of a crucified Man—and this within twenty years of the death of Jesus—and that he should have been believed; and that ideas arising out of this stupendous claim should have created a new philosophy of heaven and earth, of morals and history; is undoubtedly one of the most astonishing facts in the history of the world. Modern criticism does not dispute the facts, and modern methods of research have not reduced them to the "natural order." We are face to face with these facts now. They can never be abolished. They emit a lustre and exert a spiritual force wherever they are pondered. The simple facts themselves are, in the judgment of the most widely read students of ancient history, absolutely unique, and they have about them the same kind of almost weird wonderfulness which we should have experienced if we had seen and handled the Lord Jesus after he rose from the dead. We are compelled to believe, or at least to admit, this insoluble puzzle. History dates from this great crisis, from this commencement of a new world, this enthronement of a new Adam, this conscious victory of man over sin and death, this uplifting of the veil, this dawning of an eternal day. Christendom is practically independent of the Fourth Gospel and of the Apocalypse, so that if we were deprived of both, or if, what would be equally deplorable, we were robbed of all confidence in either, we should still have an indefeasible

inheritance, a faith that has made heroes and martyrs, a faith that works by love, a hope that will not make us ashamed.

It is a mistake to regard the Gospel of John as the acropolis or citadel of the Christian faith. The Christian Church was established; the new Jerusalem came down out of heaven; the great High Priest was seen to pass, with the blood of his own sacrifice, or in the merit of his vicarious death for the sins of the whole world, within the veil of the celestial temple; a new creation had begun; a new life was being lived; the Godhead was known to be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by reason of the lessons involved in the Divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus; *before* that Gospel opened the heart of Jesus, revealed the depths of the Father's love, or made it obvious to babes in Christ, as well as to strong men, that he had been, was, and would for ever be, "the Way, the Truth, the Life."

11. But, though the Gospel be not the acropolis of the faith or the key to the whole position occupied by Christianity, it is of incalculable preciousness. Some who have persuaded themselves that it could not have been produced by its presumed author, have been free to admit this much. On the supposition that it was produced at the close of the second century by a pious *falsarius*, as a dramatic theologic romance, with special reference to the controversies then prevailing, some advocates of this untenable hypothesis have been ready to admit that it reveals the deepest insight into the mind and heart of Jesus.

Thus F. C. Baur ('Church History of First Three Centuries,' i. 154, Eng. trans.) "cannot but admire the breadth of true feeling and the delicate art with which the evangelist has seized those elements which led from the standpoint of the Apocalypse to the freer and higher standpoint of the Gospel, so as to spiritualize the Apocalypse into the Gospel."

Schenkel ('A Sketch of the Character of Jesus: a Biblical Essay,' p. 34, Eng. trans.) says that the author of the Fourth Gospel "has taken out of their historical framework, elevated into the region of eternal thought, and invested with transfiguring glory, a selection of reminiscences from the evangelical tradition of the public life of Jesus. . . . Without this Gospel the unfathomable depth, the inaccessible height, of the character of the Saviour of the world would be wanting to us, and his boundless influence, renewing all humanity, would for ever remain a mystery. He was not what that Gospel paints him actually, but he was that essentially. . . . The representation of the character of Jesus becomes eternally true only in the heavenly splendour of that light which streams forth from the Fourth Gospel."

So Albrecht Thoma ('Die Genesis des Johannes-Evangeliums ein Beitrag zu Seiner Auslegung Geschichte und Kritik' (1882), p. 879): "Nothing earlier than itself, nothing later, not the synoptic history, nor the doctrine of the Church, is necessary to give the worth to this Gospel which corresponds to its place in the canon. From its rich treasury the scribe instructed unto the kingdom of God can ever take things both new and old. The Spirit which works within the book—the Spirit of Christ—evermore will speak what he himself hears, and will make known things to come, and will glorify him for whose glorification this Gospel has been written."

Holtzmann said (in Schenkel's 'Lexicon' (1869), vol. ii.)—what he does not exactly repeat in his recent 'Einleitung,' though he would not deny it (1885)—"The most fundamental and far-reaching thoughts of the Fourth Gospel lie far beyond the second century and beyond the entire outlook of the Christian Church even to the present day."

Testimonies like these might be indefinitely multiplied, and they call attention to the fact that very much of the most fundamental thought of the Gospel is absolutely verified by the Christian consciousness, by whomsoever it was first formulated, and at what time soever it was first recorded. *E.g.* we know, as absolutely true, that "whosoever willeth to do the will of the heavenly Father knows of the doctrine whether it be of God" or whether it merely issue from human lips; the true condemnation of sinners, viz. that "they love darkness rather than light," is affirmed by every conscience. The need of heavenly birth is corroborated by every reason that is sufficiently introspective. The spirituality of God and of worship is as far ahead of the second century as of the first, and even of the nineteenth as of the second. The drawing of the Father to the Son, by the Son, so that none cometh to the Father except by this great revelation, is so profound a thought that it establishes itself in the

spiritual life of advanced thinkers. The power of faith to heal, to invigorate, and cleanse; the mighty energies of holy love and self-sacrifice; the fact that the strongest, most energetic, love of man to man springs from common love to the Holiest and the Best; the victory of love over death; and the revelation of the spiritual and eternal to love; are among the highest of all truths. That all truth emancipates from bondage; that all believing souls will at length be one; and that the Spirit which was in Christ may and does become in the heart of the believer a well of living water, a source of life to others; are positions to lose which would impoverish human thought beyond remedy. Having been once set forth, these "open secrets" belong to humanity, and cannot be withdrawn. And so with very many other mighty utterances of this spiritual Gospel.

These concessions may, therefore, be fairly made without detracting from the flood of glory which is poured upon them when we find that the ideas themselves are referred by the evangelist to the Jesus whom he knew and loved, to whose heart he drew nearer than any other had done.

To return to the suggestions with which this section commenced. We may find it impossible to state all the reasons which intersect and blend in order to convince us that we have in this wonderful Gospel a veritable revelation of the Son of God. Psychological law will never reduce the conception to a merely ordinary humanity. We need the sense of the Divine as well as the human to prevent the portraiture here given of the Christ from shading or sheering off into the impossible and abnormal. We need our deepest persuasion that the Divine and human are not separated by an impassable chasm, but in their innermost essence are one; to recognize the portraiture of the Logos made man, in whom all the humanity at its highest is Divine, and all the Divinity at its greatest is manifested through the human.

A philosophy based on the necessary unknowableness of God, on the eternal unlikeness of God to man, on the impossibility of communication or conversableness between man and his Maker, must find an insoluble puzzle, an impossibility, in the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel, and endeavours to relegate it to a date when it supposes that the antecedents are all ready for its origination. "The life of Christ" is not itself enough for this philosophy, seeing that all the main ideas to which this Gospel calls special attention are regarded as later accretions on a simpler and less mysterious original. Everything essentially Johannine in the Christ must be excluded from the historical antecedents.

The entire synoptic narrative, notwithstanding its striking points of resemblance to the Johannine teaching in some of its most fundamental elements, is insufficient, in the view of many writers, to propound the antecedent or prepare the platform of the Fourth Gospel. The later Tübingen critics, like Holtzmann and Thoma, go very far in admitting the presence of Paulinism in the Gospel, and, instead of the rational hypothesis that the Johannine elements were widely known and deeply grasped by St. Paul, they suppose that Paul's Epistles, in all the affluence of honour rendered by him to the rank and work of Christ Jesus, are among the intellectual antecedents of what to such writers is a masterpiece of pious fraud.

But neither the synoptists, nor Paul, nor the Acts of the Apostles, nor the Apocalypse itself, all of which furnished materials to the great *falsarius*, are, in the opinion of many, sufficient antecedents for this work.

Many have attempted to show the amount of Alexandrine influence with which the author must have been saturated before he could have proposed the thesis of the prologue, and wrought into the texture of his argument what are supposed to be the ideas of Philo.

But the pre-existence of the philosophy of Philo, and the wide circulation of the entire New Testament (*minus* the Fourth Gospel), are not enough to satisfy those who cannot accept the historic verity of the idea of the Christ. The antecedents here cited would not force the Fourth Gospel out of the first century. The production of this Gospel in the first century would mean such an accession of evidence for its practical historicity that diligent search has to be made for other indications, literary and polemical, which must have preceded the composition of the Gospel.

Consequently, effort has been made to find in Cerinthus, Basilides, and Valentinus such elaborations of the idea of the relation of God to man as to constitute them into veritable antecedents of the Fourth Gospel. Even the indications which the martyr



Justin gives of the previous existence of the Gospel have been inverted, and great pains taken to show that it is not probable that Justin had read the work of John, but that "John" may have made use of Justin; and so, having cleared, not only the first century, but a large portion of the second century, from the presence of the Fourth Gospel, a *date* has been assigned to it just anterior to the time when, by universal confession, the Gospel is known to have been regarded in Antioch and Lyons, in Alexandria, Ephesus, and Rome, as one of the four indisputable authorities for the biography of the Lord Jesus.

## II. THE DETAILS OF THE ASSAULT.

The history of the assault upon the Fourth Gospel reveals an extended campaign and many hostile forces, and is instructive from the fact that many of the hypotheses (inconsistent with its genuineness) have been relinquished by the successive assailants as incompatible with known facts of literature, or ecclesiastical order, or theological construction.

The assault has been conducted along two main lines. One has been directed towards the establishment of a late date for its composition. This has been effected by a destructive and a constructive process: (1) by disputing the external testimonies to its existence before the close of the second century; (2) by endeavouring to imagine the circumstances and condition of the Church out of which it sprang, the errors it was supposed to counteract, and the necessary literary antecedents of the authorship. The second line of assault has been directed towards the *internal* incompatibilities of the narrative; the incredibility of its main teaching as the direct word of the Lord Jesus Christ; the contrast between the teaching of this "evangelist" and that of the synoptic Gospels; the improbability that the author of the document was either the "John" of the synoptic Gospels or the author of the Apocalypse.

We propose to treat these matters in detail; but, before doing so, we would call attention to the manner in which the assailants have conducted the campaign, and have receded from positions they had once taken up with extreme confidence.

Although the English deists occasionally hinted doubts of the genuineness of the four Gospels, yet the first most deliberate assault was delivered by Edward Evanson, an Anglican clergyman in Gloucester, who in 1792 published his 'Dissonance of the Four generally received Evangelists, and the Evidence of their Respective Authenticity, examined with that of other Scriptures deemed Canonical.' He regarded the greater part of the New Testament as a forgery, and accepted as true the Gospel of Luke alone. He opposed John's Gospel from its dissimilarity with the Apocalypse, and attributed it to a Platonizing philosopher of the second century.

These positions were taken up by Eckermann, by Horst (in 'Henke's Museum für Religionswissenschaft') in 1803, by Cludius, by Ballenstedt ('Philo und Johannes') in 1812, and by Vögel, who in 1801 sought to bring the Evangelist John and his interpreters to the judgment of the great day; but not until 1820 did the controversy assume a pungent phase by the publication of Bretschneider's 'Probabilia de Evangelii et Epistolarum Johannis Apostoli indole et origine.' This distinguished theologian accumulated all the difficulties besetting the problem into one vivid, powerful statement, and appeared to conclude that the Gospel was written by an Alexandrine philosopher in the first half of the second century.

The English deists were replied to by Le Clerc and Lampe. Evanson was met by Priestley and Simpson. Storr replied to Eckermann with such force that the latter retracted his doubts; and the whole position of Bretschneider was handled with such dexterity by Olshausen, by Lücke in his celebrated 'Kommentar,' and by others, that Bretschneider confessed that his doubts were resolved, and that the object he had in view was accomplished in having provoked a more thorough vindication of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel. This left the atmosphere clearer, and the ground secure for Schleiermacher to regard the Christ of John as the true Christ, and to base his theology and his view of the historical Christ upon the Fourth Gospel rather than upon any other portion of the New Testament. De Wette, in his 'Einleitung' to his first edition of his 'Handbuch' (1825), expressed serious doubts of the *proof* of the genuineness of the Gospel now possible to us; and in 1837 he confesses to his "dearest

friend" Lücke that he fears his scepticism may be grievous to him, touching the literary vindication of the authenticity of this "tender, unique, veritably supreme Gospel." Yet before this preface was written, an event of consummate influence had occurred, viz. the publication, in 1835, of Strauss's 'Leben Jesu,' which endeavoured to account for the synoptic Gospels by an oral tradition, which, with the aid of popular expectations of the Messiah, gradually accumulated around it a mythical enlargement and lustre. He proceeded, mainly by a drastic criticism of the Gospels, to reveal their discrepancies, and to account for them by the growth of legend and the accretion of non-historical elements. For a time he seemed to waver as to the possible authenticity of the Fourth Gospel, but relinquished it in subsequent editions of his notorious work, seeing that the whole of his mythical theory would have been broken to pieces if he allowed that a disciple of Jesus had produced a chronicle of his deeds and words which violated the physical and psychological laws which he regarded as irreversible. Strauss's temporary vacillation was intensified by the powerful effect produced upon him by the appearance of Neander's 'Life of Christ,' which was an attempt to show that unquestionable facts existed and could not be disproved, out of which the entire evangelic narrative might have arisen.

C. H. Weiss (‘Die Evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet,’ 1838) propounded a specious theory, which has been not unfrequently adopted by some later critics, that there is an apostolic foundation for the fourth evangelist, which consisted of "studies" of the mind of Christ expanded in the old age of the evangelist, —when his memory grew dim—into the discourses of the Gospel, and that, at a later date, these were woven into a fictitious narrative. Fromman refuted the hypothesis with ability in 1849.

Bruno Bauer (1840) pursued an attack on different lines. He recognized, what has ever since been felt more and more, that the Fourth Gospel is not a spontaneous evolution of mythical tendency, but the work of "a poet conscious of his procedure," and capable of initiating a philosophical romance. Doubtless the plan, the growth, the gathering solemnity, the climax of the Gospel, with its prologue and epilogue, show that it is the work of one mind, not the elaboration or crystallization of many minds. It bears from end to end the impress of a most original and masterly thinker, and, if it were not the work of the apostle, it must have been the creation of a deliberate forger. The moral revulsion which such a theory excites has led to many and varied replies. Notably Ebrard distinguished himself in 1843 (‘Wissenschaftliche Kritik der Evangel. Gesch.’), by demolishing the rival theories of Strauss and Bruno Bauer. An English translation of the second edition was published in 1863.

But all previous assailants do, in one sense, fall back into insignificance by the side of the epoch-making arguments of Ferdinand Christian Baur, of Tübingen, who, by articles first published in Zeller's *Theolog. Jahrbücher*, and afterwards brought together in his 'Kritische Untersuchungen über die canonischen Evangelien' (1847), and 'Das Christenthum und die Christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte' (1853) [the latter translated into English in two vols., London] endeavoured to establish such a view of the Christian Churches and of the creation of the 'Catholic Church' in the second century as would provide at that period a platform and "historical situation" on which the grand edifice of the Fourth Gospel could have been erected. He supposed that it reveals traces throughout of the activity and various speculations of the Gnostic schools, which characterized the second half of the century. He held that the Churches were split into two hostile camps: (1) those which clung to the ancient Jewish observances, the vitality of the Law, the restriction of the highest Messianic privileges to the house of Israel, headed and guided by the representatives of the Jerusalem apostles—Peter, James the Just, and John the son of Zebedee; and (2) those which were largely composed of Gentiles who reverted to the authority of Paul. The four uncontested Epistles are so expounded as to reveal a permanent breach between Paul and the original apostles. These two tendencies in the Church were aggravated by Marcionite antagonism to Judaism on the one side, and by Montanistic extravagances and reaction against the episcopate on the other. Baur further held that, towards the second half of the century, these two parties in the Church were disposed to come into closer relationship with each other. At or before this time he supposes numerous forgeries to have occurred. For instance, the Acts of the Apostles had

been written as an *eirenicon*, with the endeavour to prove, by forged facts, that Peter and Paul were not really estranged from one another; that the substance of their preaching was practically identical, and that their relation to the heathen world and to the legal observance by Jews of circumcision had much in common. Pseudo-Pauline Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians, and the pastoral Epistles, he held recently to have helped to bridge the chasm between the opposing parties. At length some manifesto was urgently needed which should show that there was truth on both sides, that Paulinism and Petrinism were really one in their dogmatic root, that while "salvation was of the Jews," yet "God is a Spirit," and his worship independent of Jerusalem and Gerizim. This position he thought not likely to be taken till after the second humiliation of Jerusalem under Hadrian. This manifesto might involve all that was essential or good in Montanism or Marcionitism, and should endeavour to root all in a popular theory of the Logos. The eternal Logos was no sooner believed to have become incarnate in Jesus, than from him all the unifying truths might be presumed to have proceeded. Baur supposed that some "great unknown" attempted this colossal task, and produced the Fourth Gospel, which exactly met the case. By subtle suggestions its author meant to convey the idea that it was written by the son of Zebedee, who is represented as specially dear to Jesus, and therefore competent to reveal his thought. An additional argument of great ingenuity was advanced. At this particular juncture, said Baur, the difference between the Eastern and Western Churches as to the celebration of Easter and the Paschal rite had once more come forward. It was supposed that the synoptic Gospels had demonstrated the fact that the Lord ate the Passover with his disciples on the night before his crucifixion. It was said that John favoured this view, his example being quoted against the Roman custom of continuing the fast until the eve of the Easter morning. What could be more advantageous, in the growing interest of the "Catholic Church," than that it should appear that the Lord was crucified on the 14th Nisan, and then to have John's authority for regarding Christ's death as the veritable Passover? This he suggested as one of the motives of the Fourth Gospel.

Baur thus considered every word of this Catholic manifesto as dexterously chosen to accomplish one or more of these results. Thus the mythical hypothesis vanishes, and the hints of Bruno Bauer are made to take the place of the Straussian construction of the life of Jesus. Baur fixed the *date* of the composition about the year A.D. 170, when all these conditions combined, as he imagined, to provide its "historical situation."

The date is a matter of prime importance in this speculation, and the defenders of the authenticity were not slow to appeal to the historical proof of the existence of this Gospel before the year A.D. 170. Ebrard, in his introduction to the Commentary on the Gospel (Eng. trans.), Thiersch ('Versuch zur Herstellung des historischen Standpunkts für die Kritik der Neutestamentlichen Schriften'), and Bleek ('Beiträge zur Evangelien-Kritik') discussed the positions of Baur with great acumen and force. Later on we give the proof that Irenæus, between A.D. 180 and 185, quoted the Gospel as canonical and inspired Scripture; that Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 170) quoted the Gospel as that of John; that Celsus, whose work Origen commented on and refuted, must have been familiar with the Fourth Gospel; that the Muratorian Fragment shows, about A.D. 170, that it was regarded as of equal importance with the other Gospels; that Tatian, before A.D. 170, composed his 'Harmony of the Four Gospels'; and that the pseudo-Clementine literature (as is now admitted by Hilgenfeld) quoted the Fourth Gospel; that the disciples of Valentinus, viz. Heracleon and Ptolemæus, were acquainted with the Gospel, the former writing a commentary on it between A.D. 125 and 155! Thus it appeared that the date on which Baur laid stress, and in the midst of which he found the historical *locus* for its composition, absolutely vanishes. Godet shows, with conspicuous ability, that the supposed purpose of the author to reconcile Christ's death-day with the Paschal feast would not have accomplished the purpose of defending the Roman celebration of the Communion on Easter morning; and that there is no probability that the sacramental commemoration of the night of the Passion by the Eastern Church was any commemoration of the moment when the *Eucharist* was instituted, but rather a prolongation of theocratic memories coupled with a reverent celebration of the death itself.

Baur's *date* could not be sustained, and his followers and disciples have been compelled to take fresh ground while endorsing his main principles.

We shall see the further proof that Justin Martyr, about A.D. 150, was acquainted with the Gospel. The evidence has been sufficient to convince Hilgenfeld ('Das Evangelium und die Briefe Johannis nach ihrem Lehrbegriffe dargestellt,' 1849; 'Die Evangelien,' 1854; see also his recently published 'Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in das Neue Test.:' 1875) that Baur's date must be abandoned; but this great scholar labours with vast learning to show that the Gospel reveals traces of Valentinian Gnosticism, which might have been available to the author between A.D. 136 and 140. In such a controversy as this, forty years nearer to apostolic times is a concession of considerable importance. The connection between Valentinian gnosis and the Gospel cannot be, need not be, ignored; but a reasonable conclusion is that Valentinus made use of terms found in a revered Christian document, not that the unknown author of such document borrowed the terms "Logos," "Life," "Light," "Truth," which he uses with didactic simplicity, from the *æons* and *syzygies* of the Gnostic. Volkmar and Scholten also abandoned their master's date, fixing it nevertheless at A.D. 150 or 155, one which we believe to be invalidated by the evidence derived from the quotations of Justin, as well as from the use made by Valentinus of the Gospel itself.

Volkmar, and after him both Reville and Renan, have expressed their wonder that (if the Fourth Gospel had been in existence in A.D. 150), Marcion did not make use of it instead of the Gospel of Luke. The true reply is that John's Gospel afforded no scientific or historic basis for Marcion, and that not even by interpolation or excision could he have utilized this document; so that his silence and neglect must count for nothing in determining the date of the latter. Effort was made to find reference (ch. xvi. 2) to the massacres of Christians in the insurrection of Barchochab (A.D. 132); but the martyrdom of Stephen, of James the Just, and others, to say nothing of the Neronian persecution, and the deaths of Peter and Paul, are more than sufficient to justify even a forger between A.D. 80 and 100 in attributing these words to Jesus.

Keim, who in 1867 was content, while repudiating the authenticity of the Gospel, to accept the date A.D. 100-115 for its production, yet in 1875, without any apparently sufficient reason, altered his opinion and regarded A.D. 130 as a probable date.

Dr. Davidson, mainly on the ground of the insufficiency of the evidence for the anteriority of the Gospel to the writings of Basileides and his followers, settles down to the same date. The proof of the earlier date, which was admitted by Keim in 1867, turns on the use made of the Gospel by the apostolic Fathers. The powerful evidence produced by Zahn and by Bishop Lightfoot for the authenticity of the seven epistles of Ignatius and the epistle of Polycarp, does, as we shall see, go far to demonstrate the existence of the Gospel in the first decade of the second century, as well as to pulverize the entire hypothesis of the great breach in the Church of Christ to heal which many critics suggest that this Gospel was composed.

If the epistles of Ignatius be genuine, they reveal a state of ecclesiastical government far in advance of the pastoral Epistles of Paul, and certainly throw back the date of those Epistles for a generation behind them. The Pauline Epistles as the Acts of the Apostles and the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, recognize no difference of rank or of duty between bishops and elders; whereas about A.D. 110 the Ignatian epistles emphasize the distinction between these Church officers. *Ergo* these pastoral Epistles cannot well be a birth of a period subsequent to the Ignatian letters. If so, whether the production of Paul or not, they reveal, towards the close of the first century, the germ of the Gnostic virus which had already distressed the early Church.

Even the Epistles to the Corinthians by St. Paul show very forcibly that the Church at Corinth, between A.D. 57 and 58, had been cursed by the very spirit which the First Epistle of John so powerfully condemned. Why should we on this account travel into the midst of, or towards the end of, the second century to find the "historical situation" when Gnostic Ebionism and Docetic theosophy had emasculated the Christian faith of many? and why should we fancy that the Church required the questionable aid of a *falsarius*, who must have set himself by immoral means to refute the enemy by inventing *pro hac vice* the words and works of Jesus? If Valentinus and Marcion, Barchochab and the followers of Basileides, the Easter controversy, and the enthusiasm of Montanus were all constituents in the creation of the Gospel; and if the author were, moreover, saturated with Pauline ideas, and intent on giving practical and concrete illustration to the Logos doctrine of Philo and of Justin, and also delicately to correct and combine the tendencies

conspicuous in the First and Third Gospels;—what a miracle of ingenuity the Fourth Gospel becomes! It is even more wonderful than if it be regarded as a simple record of the memories of an unforgotten past.

That Justin, Montanus, and Valentinus, that Ignatius and Polycarp, should have had this venerated fragment in their hands, and used it severally in defence of their own positions, is quite as credible as that Irenæus and Origen, Clemens Alex., and Tertullian, or the followers of Basileides, should subsequently have done the same. But this hypothesis demands the first appearance of the Gospel in the first century. Such a conclusion renders the Johannine authorship so immensely probable that those who are driven to the former, but deny the latter view adopt a variety of methods to evade the inference.

Granting an early date, Keim, *e.g.*, has evaded the force of the conclusion by agreeing with Reuterdahl and Lützelburger in the endeavour to refute the widely spread tradition of St. John's residence in Ephesus and to rehabilitate the old shadow of the Presbyter John. He refuses credence to the point-blank assurance of Irenæus, who is said to have blundered in reporting what Polycarp had told him. He thinks that Irenæus led all subsequent writers to regard Polycarp as a disciple of the *Apostle* John, whereas he supposes that the martyr's intimacies had never gone beyond those of the venerable *Presbyter* John. Scholten even goes so far as to deny the apostolic origin of the *Apocalypse*, which the school of Baur and Hilgenfeld had made the keystone of their construction. He thinks an unknown person in Ephesus was its author, who, having adopted the name of John in order to give his work greater currency, was supposed afterwards to have been the apostle. The consequence of these violent hypotheses is that John the son of Zebedee, instead of being regarded as the author of five of the New Testament books, sinks into utter obscurity after the reference made to him in Gal. ii.; and that tradition and literature have been equally deceived through a perverse and unfortunate blunder of Irenæus.

In the course of our exposition we shall have frequent opportunities of indicating the extraordinary positions of Albrecht Thoma ('Die Genesis des Johannes-Evangeliums ein Beitrag zu seiner Auslegung Geschichte und Kritik'). He reviews the sources, the history, the contents, of the Gospel with great eloquence and vast knowledge; but he sees in the Fourth Gospel the artistic setting forth of the ideas of the middle of the second century with reference to the origin of Christian history; *e.g.* the ninth chapter is the evangelist's method of describing the conversion of St. Paul; "Judas" is a covert reference to Simon Magus; and the twenty-first chapter is the Johannine version of the Acts of the Apostles. In every line of the Gospel he discerns the influence of the Alexandrine school of thought.

Gebhart, in his 'Theology of the Apocalypse,' defends, with great ability, the identity of its authorship with that of the Gospel, but he renounces the historicity of the Gospel. Both documents, he thinks, may have been produced by the son of Zebedee, but they are both imaginative elaborations of the same fundamental ideas—one in the form of history and the other in that of apocalyptic vision.

Ewald and Reuss *do* in a certain way admit the authenticity, but deny the historical character of the discourses and miracles of the Fourth Gospel. In his latest edition of 'The History of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament,' translated by Houghton, Reuss will not admit more than a bare possibility that it was produced by the son of Zebedee. "It was certainly not written by the author of the Apocalypse," nor by "the John of Gal. ii.;" but Reuss admits that this John *may* have suffered as great a transformation as Paul and as Peter are seen to have done. "A germ of profound religiosity may have been implanted in a heart which needed only change of air and soil to bring it to maturity." Reuss will not be moved by the Easter controversy to decide against the Johannine authorship, nor does he think that the speculation that some pupil of the apostle produced it on the basis of some genuine and original information, solves the difficulty.

Tobler ('Die Evangelien-Fragm.:' 1858) advocated the view that Apollos was the author, in virtue of the most important chronological, historical, and autoptic matter which it contains; and Renan, in the latest editions of the 'Life of Jesus,' supposes that a "semi-Gnostic constituted himself the editor of the narratives of the aged apostle, and perhaps possessed some notes, dictated by the latter, which formed the primary

materials of his work. Reuss pronounces that this view "sacrifices the spirit to the appearance, and in fact is too sharp-sighted." Mangold's edition of Bleek's 'Einleitung' admits the sufficiency of the external evidences, but regards the internal difficulties of the authenticity to be insurmountable. On the other hand, B. Weiss, in his 'Life of Jesus' (Eng. trans.), lays powerful emphasis on the historicity of the Gospel, and loses no opportunity of demonstrating the light which it throws upon the synoptic narrative.

Holtzmann ('Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das N.T.:' 1885) has emphasized the strongly subjective elements of the narrative, its artistic arrangement, the sources from which the author must have drawn his material. Of these, with Albrecht Thoma, he assigns a large place to the Pauline Epistles. He measures the amount of dependence upon the synoptic Gospels, discriminating between the kind of aid he derived from Mark and Luke; he finds the unhistorical in the method by which the great attributes of God are revealed in the concrete life of the incarnate Logos, but uses some of the worn-out arguments to rid these instances of the Divine energy of Jesus, of their historic character. The great puzzle appears to him to consist of the twofold character of the Gospel—the blending of historic detail with lofty ideality. The solution of it attempted by B. Weiss does not satisfy Holtzmann. The symbolism of the Gospel for him detracts from its historicity, forgetful, as it seems to us, that the lives of our greatest men and the history of the epochs of our race are charged with events which become symbolic of life-purposes or world-wide tendencies. Julius Cæsar crossing the Rubicon, Socrates in his prison, William of Normandy falling on the soil of Pevensey, Luther at the Diet of Worms, etc., are instances in point. Holtzmann falls back on the Baurian method of discovering an "historical situation," but does not feel that he has solved the problem.

The defenders of the authenticity against every attack and on every ground have been very numerous. Every one of the special assaults has called up an army of defence, and in the writings of Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Luthardt, Lange, Lücke, Bleek, Meyer, De Pressensé, and Godet, few points or speculations have been left untouched. Canon Westcott's 'Introduction to the Study of the Gospels' and the 'Introduction to the Commentary on St. John;' Dr. Ezra Abbott's 'External Evidence of the Authorship of the Gospel;' Mr. Matthew Arnold, in 'God and the Bible;' Mr. R. Holt Hutton, in an essay of great value, 'Essays, Theological and Literary,' vol. i.; Beischlag, 'Studien und Kritiken, 1874-5,' and published separately),—have discussed the chief points with masterly hand. Mr. Sanday, 'The Authorship and Character of the Fourth Gospel' and 'The Gospels in the Second Century,' with quiet force has set aside the conclusions of the author of 'Supernatural Religion;' Oosterzee ('Das Johannes-evangelium, Vier Vorträge,' and Eng. trans., 1869); Milligan, in *Contemporary Review*, 1867-1871, and in 'Introduction to Commentary' by himself and Professor Moulton, have grappled with various parts of the controversy.

Seeing that Holtzmann, Mangold, S. Davidson, Thoma, and others maintain the adverse opinion still, the controversy cannot be said to have terminated; and we cannot proceed with our Exposition without placing before the readers of the 'Pulpit Commentary' an outline of the evidences both "external" and "internal" on the faith of which we hold that this most wonderful of all the biblical writings is not the dream of a second-century sage, but the sacred record of a personal experience. That which is to some students clear evidence of the antecedency of the Gospel becomes, in the hand of others, proof that "the evangelist" had material ready to his hand in the floating ideas of the second century. Prepossession and preconceived opinion may bias the impartial critic. Let it be understood that prepossessions are not all on one side. The "sceptic" here has, moreover, far more at stake than the "apologist." The Christian believer is not dependent on the Fourth Gospel, however much he might deplore the sacrifice of its historicity. The fall of this Gospel from its high place would not touch the authenticity of the Gospel of Luke, nor that of the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians. All the essentials of the faith would be left intact. But, on the other hand, the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel becomes an impregnable defence of supernatural revelation, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of the resurrection and glory of the Christ. If the Fourth Gospel was the work of the beloved disciple, then the "scientific" instrument which has been elaborated with infinite care



by successive opponents of the mystery of God therein revealed is hopelessly shattered. Consequently, there is, to say the least, as much room for predisposition and bias on the one side as on the other.

### III. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE EARLY EXISTENCE OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

**1. Introductory remarks.** (1) In discussing the question of the genuineness of any ancient writing, we are confronted with the positive and negative evidence of its existence at a time consistent with the alleged authorship. The external evidence of the existence at any particular date of any ancient document, to be absolutely satisfactory, would be the existence of other ancient trustworthy documents, whose date can be approximately fixed near the date of the life of the supposed author, in which quotations from the work in question occur, and wherein such quotations are definitely ascribed to a work which can be, without reasonable doubt, identified with that about which we make the inquiry. If an unimpeachable contemporary authority, either with favourable or hostile intent, has left behind him such a quotation from one of Paul's Epistles or from one of Plato's dialogues or Horace's odes, the question of the existence of either of these documents at the period when the quotation was made would be practically settled.

It is not often possible to arrive at evidence so entirely conclusive as this. We may have to travel down the stream of time for a whole generation or more before we find a single trustworthy quotation, and, when we discover one, we may be surprised to see that it is not accurate, and that it is not referred to the previous author. Still, from the manner of its introduction, the second authority may reveal the place which the former writing held in the opinion of his contemporaries; and it may happen that obvious reasons occur why the authorship of such quotation should not have been cited or appealed to; and yet such a citation may prove to be of very convincing and important character.

(2) The non-existence of the evidence which we have described as unimpeachable by no means establishes the spuriousness or later origin of the document whose date we wish to verify. The letter to Diognetus, which has taken its place among the sub-apostolic literature—a position, we admit, by no means unquestioned—does not appear to have been quoted, or copied, or referred to by any ancient writer, nor by any writer at all till the sixteenth century. The Second Epistle of Peter was not mentioned, nor quoted from, nor, so far as we know, translated into any other language until the beginning of the fourth century; yet it would be the height of hypercriticism, even among those who doubt its apostolic origin, to refer its production by a *falsarius* to a date later than the second century. Positive evidence of an external kind may *not* be forthcoming, but this circumstance will not prove the non-existence of the document. All that can be deduced from such a fact is that the authors of the few and fragmentary treatises which have survived did not in them allude to or quote from the document we are anxious to identify.

(3) Further, we see, at a glance, that the writers who do quote a more ancient authority may, when they made their citation, have had no reason for any specific mention of the name of the previous writer. If Justin Martyr, *e.g.*, had called the attention of the Roman emperors to the obscure names of Matthew, Mark, or John, it would not have conciliated their regard. The more general title of "memorials by the apostles of Christ and by their companions"—a phrase peculiarly applicable to our four Gospels—was much more likely to secure attention from his readers, although it may fail to satisfy the demand of modern criticism and of technical accuracy.

(4) Again, we may find that some of the quotations are inaccurately made. They may be rather the transfusion into the language of the later writer of the thought of the older writer, with only a few verbal coincidences, and yet they may furnish us even now with powerful evidence of the kind we seek.

The books were often quoted from memory—a practice stimulated by the difficulty of making accurate citations at any time by the cumbrous form, difficult caligraphy, and great rarity of the books themselves. Lengthened passages, such as Ps. xxii. and Isa. liii., which are quoted *in extenso*, accurately correspond with the LXX. Version; but numerous quotations are made from the Old Testament with the same vagueness

as we find attributed to the citations from the Gospels. It is not possible, on the ground of this vagueness or inaccuracy, to argue that the apologists never saw or read the Greek translations of the Old Testament. The same indulgence should be afforded to the apostolic Fathers and apologists, when they cite the words of Jesus. The deviations of Justin Martyr's quotation of the celebrated passage in Matt. xi. 25, etc., have been supposed to invalidate the proof of the pre-existence of St. Matthew's Gospel given therein (author of 'Supernatural Religion'); but the argument has been turned by Dr. Abbott producing a long series of quotations of the very same passage, from Irenæus to our own day, and many made by writers who had the Gospel before them in printed form, and were perfectly familiar with its apostolic origin, who also have deviated from the original text and more widely than Justin.

Some of the early writers are known to have produced numerous books, but the smallest portion only of some of these is extant. Because a Gospel or Epistle is not referred to in these fragments, we have no right to conclude that the author was ignorant of their existence. Suppose, eighteen hundred years hence, a fragment of one of Ruskin's volumes of 'Stones of Venice' should be all that the most vigilant book-collector could find of his works; and if in it no mention was made of Turner or Hunt, will it therefore become reasonable to say that Turner did not live until two hundred years after Ruskin? A thousand other illustrations might be given of the unreason of the modern methods of identifying and disparaging the books of the New Testament.

(5) One of the most powerful testimonies to the existence of an ancient document is the fact that it was translated into a foreign tongue at an ascertainable date. We are, therefore, justified in placing great confidence on the fact that the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul are found in the Peshito Syriac and the Old Latin translations of the New Testament; but even this evidence, if it be negative, is not final. The Apocalypse, *e.g.*, is not found in this most ancient Syriac Version. Moreover, first-class manuscript authority for its presence in the canon of the New Testament is lacking; and yet other positive external evidence of authenticity is so strong that perhaps there is no portion of the New Testament that stands upon a more irrefragable basis. Our conclusion is that the non-mention of a book in the fragments that remain of the literature of the second century, even in places where one might expect a reference to it from the nature of the subject-matter, affords no reason for concluding that the book in question was not known to the author of the fragment. Other reasons for the omission can be conjectured, just as satisfactory explanations for the omission of the Apocalypse from the Syriac canon of the New Testament can be easily advanced.

2. We may now proceed to show that during the last quarter of the second century, we have indubitable proof of the existence of *four* Gospels, distinguished from all other narratives of the life and sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the four Gospels thus selected were regarded in every part of the Roman empire with peculiar reverence, and were quoted and appealed to with the same frequency as they have been in every decade from that day to this. There is no discussion now as to the substantial identity of the documents thus signalized with our four Gospels, attributed to or described as being according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Granting for the moment that the previous references to these documents are less explicit, it is expedient to look at the nature, quality, and fulness of the evidence which we possess for the fourfold character of this wonderful narrative at the date in question. In earlier times the entire substance of the apostolic teaching on this subject was called τὸ εὐαγγέλιον—"the Gospel," and this word was used somewhat vaguely by both Christian and heretical writers, as descriptive of the good message or acceptable speculation which they were offering to their readers. Thus the followers of *Basileides* are said by Hippolytus ('Ref. Hær., vii. 27) to have had a "gospel" which was ἡ τῶν ὑπερκosμίων γνώσις, "the knowledge of supramundane things," and, though a Gnostic speculation, it was dignified by this great name. The same name was subsequently by Theophilus applied to the four separate Gospels; and from that date we begin to hear, not only of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, but τὰ εὐαγγέλια.

(1) The first and greatest authority is IRENÆUS, Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, who lived between A.D. 140 and 202, and who probably wrote his great and important treatise between A.D. 180 and 190, of whom also, with other fragments, is preserved by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' v. 20) a letter written by him to one Florinus, who, towards

the close of the second century, was a presbyter in Rome, and was in danger of lapsing into the Valentinian heresy concerning the unity of God. The letter records the early experience of Irenæus and his youthful recollections of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, and the grief that Polycarp would have felt if he had known the heretical tendencies of Florinus.

"These doctrines," says he, "O Florinus, to say the least, are not of a sound understanding. These doctrines are inconsistent with the Church, and calculated to thrust those that follow them into the greatest impiety. These doctrines, not even the heretics out of the Church ever attempted to assert. These doctrines were never delivered to thee by the presbyters before us, those who also were the immediate disciples of the apostles. For I saw thee when I was yet a boy in the Lower Asia with Polycarp, moving in great splendour at court, and endeavouring by all means to gain his esteem. I remember the events of those times much better than those of more recent occurrence. As the studies of our youth, growing with our minds, unite with them so firmly that I can tell also the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse; and also his entrances, his walks, his manner of life, the form of his body, his conversations with the people, and his familiar intercourse with John, as he was accustomed to tell, as also his familiarity with the rest of those that had seen the Lord. How also he used to relate their discourses, and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord. Also concerning his miracles, his doctrine; all these were told by Polycarp, in consistency with the Holy Scriptures as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the doctrine of salvation. These things, by the mercy of God, and the opportunity then afforded me, I attentively heard, noting them down, not on paper, but in my heart; and these same facts I am always in the habit, by the grace of God, of recalling faithfully to mind. And I can bear witness in the sight of God that, if that blessed apostolic presbyter had heard any such thing as this, he would have exclaimed, and stopped his ears, and, according to his custom, would have said, 'O good God, unto what times hast thou reserved me, that I should tolerate these things?' He would have fled from the place in which he had sat or stood hearing doctrines like these. From his epistles, also, which he wrote to the neighbouring Churches in order to confirm them, or to some of the brethren in order to admonish or to exhort them, the same thing may be clearly shown."

This paints the character of the man, his confidence in what he calls "the Scriptures," and the exceeding improbability that he should have repeatedly quoted from John's Gospel, as his, words which, according to some modern critics, had only seen the light very lately, and had no connection whatever with the apostle, who was known and beloved by his personal friend.

Let it be also observed that Irenæus speaks of the "two testaments" as proceeding from one and the same God. "The argument," says he, "of a presbyter the disciple of the apostles" ('Hær.,' iv. 32: 'Anti-Nicene Library,' ii. 4, 5). And in defending the view of this presbyter, he quotes unmistakably ch. i. 3 (cf. v. 36. 1, 2). He speaks (i. 3. 6: 'Anti-Nicene Library,' i. 15) of the writings of the evangelists and apostles being perverted, as well as those of the prophets, to their own ends.

In the commencement of iii. 1 we find a special enumeration of the four Gospels, which are attributed to the respective authors. Frequent allusions are made to the Gospel of John by name, and a mystic reason is given for there being "four Gospels," neither more nor less. And some account follows of the special use which the heretics had made of these Gospels, revealing therefore, not only their wide diffusion in the Churches, but their influence beyond the limits of the Churches, and proving that they must have held a position of high significance and authority to be appealed to by friend and foe. This occurs about A.D. 180—190, and some of these references look back over a period of twenty to thirty years at least. The quotations from the four Gospels made by Irenæus fill eleven closely printed folio pages in Massuet's edition of his works, and amount to no fewer than five hundred, one hundred of these being taken from the Fourth Gospel (see index of 'Anti-Nicene Library:' 'Works of Irenæus,' ii. pp. 193—197).

(2) While Irenæus thus proves for us the wide diffusion of these *four* Gospels in the western division of the empire, we have an equally extensive circulation of these documents in the East; for THEOPHILUS, Bishop of Antioch before A.D. 170 (and who

died before the end of the century), writing to a heathen, Antolycus, declares that in the prophets and in the *Gospels* the same things were advanced, and that all alike was spoken under the inspiration of the one Spirit of God. Among these testimonies he quotes, from John's Gospel and under that designation, ch. i. 1, also Matt. v. 38 and other passages of the New Testament. He is said to have written commentaries on the Gospels—a circumstance which proves the estimation in which they were held.

(3) CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, the teacher of Origen and Hippolytus, the head of the catechetical school from A.D. 189, was a presbyter whose knowledge of philosophy and literature, though somewhat superficial and discursive, was without question varied. He was a *litterateur* rather than a theologian. He held in reverence other Christian writings as well as the New Testament, and thus his evidence as to the character and nature of the New Testament books is weakened; but his testimony as to the number of the evangelists is weighty, and the use he made of their narratives explicit. He gives to the four Gospels the same authority that he attributed to the Law and prophets. He contrasts the teaching of the 'Gospel of the Egyptians' with that of "the four Gospels, which," he says, "were handed down to us." Eusebius preserves ('Hist. Eccl.,' vi. 14) an important passage, in which Clement declares that Peter was the virtual author of St. Mark's Gospel, and that "John wrote a spiritual Gospel, divinely moved by the Holy Spirit, on observing that the things obvious to the senses had been clearly set forth in the earlier Gospels." There are between four and five hundred quotations made by him from the four Gospels.

(4) To Irenæus in Gaul, Theophilus in Syria, Clement in Eastern Africa, must be added TERTULLIAN, who spent the greater part of his literary life in Carthage. Towards the close of the second century Tertullian revealed an intimate acquaintance with the *four* Gospels. His testimony is important, because there is not a chapter in the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John from which he does not quote. In his work '*Adv. Marcionem*' (iv. 2) he says, "Among the apostles, *John* and *Matthew* form the faith within us; among the companions of the apostles, *Luke* and *Mark* renovate it." Evangelists and apostles are placed by him on the same platform with the prophets and apostles. The Gospels are said by him to be read in the assemblies ('*Apol.*' 39).

The testimony of Tertullian is indirectly of greater importance than that of Irenæus or of Clement, in the following way. Tertullian contested the philosophical position of the great heresiarch Marcion. The assault against Marcion brought to light the fact that that writer had, as Tertullian thought, iniquitously mutilated the Third Gospel, with the view of making it confirm his views with respect to the Person of the Lord, the opposition between the new covenant and the Old Testament, and even between the God of Moses and of the prophets and of the Father who was manifested in Jesus Christ.

Some writers, at one time Baur and Ritschl, took advantage of this representation to hazard the theory that Tertullian was in the wrong; that Marcion had not mutilated the Third Gospel, but had edited the earliest form of an evangelical narrative; and that our Third Gospel is an enlargement and development of this primæval document. Volkmar, one of the most distinguished of the Tübingen critics, took up the defence of the patristic writers in this respect, and convinced even Baur and Ritschl that their argument was false. The author of '*Supernatural Religion*,' in his first edition, returned to the subject, and reasserted the Tübingen hypothesis, with the view of depreciating the antiquity and originality of the Gospel of Luke. Dr. Sanday, in his admirable work '*The Gospels in the Second Century*,' met this writer on his own ground. He showed that the Gospel of Luke contains three hundred and nine verses not found in Marcion's Gospel. If these three hundred and nine verses were the work of some later hand, they would reveal striking differences from the style of the remaining portion of the work which Marcion had preserved; but it is capable of proof, according to Dr. Sanday, that these three hundred and nine verses contain no fewer than a hundred and eighty-five peculiarities of the style which characterizes the residuary Gospel, and two hundred and twenty-four words or phrases specially familiar to the writer of these main portions of the work. Dr. Sanday discusses every one of the omissions, and shows that there was sufficient reason for Marcion to have been anxious to expunge them. He shows that it is possible that some of the alterations or deviations of Marcion's Gospel from that of the canonical Luke may have been due to a difference of text; for they have been confirmed by some of the oldest manuscripts.

This circumstance reveals the fact that divergences of text arose before either the Syriac or Old Latin Version was made, and we are thrown still further back to a period long before the time of Marcion for the original autograph from which these two families of texts must genealogically have descended. Tertullian, therefore, is witness unconsciously to the great antiquity of a document which in a particular form of codex **must** have been long honoured and widely diffused before the date of Marcion. Now, it is generally agreed that Marcion diffused his sentiments between A.D. 139 and 142. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' has acknowledged that, in this argument, Dr. Sanday has refuted his own hypothesis; and so we may consider the question as finally settled. The examination goes very far towards demonstrating the authenticity of the Third Gospel. Godet ('Introduction to John's Gospel,' i. 221) makes it appear eminently probable that Marcion was acquainted with the Gospel of John.

3. Further testimonies are borne to the existence of the four Gospels by the writings of Justin the Martyr. These writings, consisting of the 'Dialogue with Trypho' and the two 'Apologies,' according to the best critics must have been written between A.D. 145 and 148, the latter year being that of his martyrdom.

The narratives and teachings in the four Gospels, and especially in the first and third, are frequently cited by Justin. He professes to have appealed to the "Memorials composed by the apostles and their followers," without mentioning their names—names, however, which would have carried no weight either with bigoted Jews, Greek philosophers, or Roman emperors. In 'Apol.' i. 66, he refers to those memorials "which are called Gospels." Opponents are eager to evade the force of this reference by saying that the parenthetical clause is a gloss foisted into the text from the margin. This is not impossible, but we know that Marcion had already called the narrative which he published "a Gospel," or "the Gospel." The expression, "memoirs by apostles," is used eight times. Four times, "memoirs" or "memorabilia" (*ἀπομνημονεύματα*); once ('Apol.' i. 66), "memoirs made by the apostles" (*ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια*); once ('Dial.' 103), "memoirs composed by apostles of Christ and those who followed them," when quoting Luke; and once from "Peter's memoirs," when quoting a fact only mentioned in the Second Gospel. He uses the expression, "the apostles wrote" ('Dial.' 88), when speaking of an incident mentioned by all four; and ('Apol.' i. 67) he refers to the "memoirs by the apostles" as of equal value with the writings of the prophets. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' says this description cannot apply to the four Gospels, because only two professed to be written by apostles, whereas the term "the apostles" ought to have meant the twelve!

Now, the references which Justin makes do in a few places add interesting and picturesque details to the narratives of the synoptists; such, e.g., as that the Magi came from *Arabia*; that a fire was kindled in Jordan at the baptism of Christ; that in a *cave* at Bethlehem Christ was born; and that as a carpenter he made ploughs and yokes. Some sayings not recorded in our canonical Gospels are cited by Justin; but the great proportion of these quotations or references correspond in a remarkable way with the narrative of the four Gospels, and record matters peculiar to all four of them. The story told by Justin was substantially identical with that of the Gospels, both as to the great character portrayed, the miraculous accompaniments of his ministry, the sorrow and mystery of his death, the incidents of his trial, which he characteristically confirms by appealing to the 'Acta Pontii Pilati.' He refers to the last Supper, to the fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the twenty-second psalm, to the nails and spear, to the sneers of his murderers, and to the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He refers to the resurrection on the third day being a first day of a week, to his ascension, and the institution of baptism in the Name of the Father of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now, Dr. Sanday, admitting for the sake of argument that Justin may have had before him some digest or harmonistic document which he used as well as the original Gospels, makes it extremely probable that such a document, if it existed, **must** have been one framed out of the original Gospels, and not that from which they can have been supposed to have been fashioned. The alterations, deviations, and additions are of the secondary and derivative, not of the primary and germinant, kind. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' points to the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews' as the primitive source of these quotations, but unfortunately for the theory, it is

known that this Gospel did not contain passages which were undoubtedly in Justin's authorities.

There is, in fact, nothing in Justin's quotations from the "memoirs" which is not substantially contained in the canonical Gospels, and the deviations are only such as can be paralleled by the later writers who did indubitably quote from the four Gospels as we now have them.

It is beyond credibility that, seeing that Irenæus must have been in early manhood when Justin was making such abundant use of the "memorabilia by the apostles and their followers," that these books could have perished, and in the brief period that elapsed before Irenæus wrote his 'Refutation of Heresies,' the four Gospels could have been manipulated into existence, and should have entirely displaced the earlier documents. Already, Justin tells us, these memoirs were read in churches at their solemn festivals, and yet, according to our opponents, they must have been ousted between the date of Justin and that of Irenæus, and four other documents have gained universal acceptance from Lyons to Alexandria, from Antioch to Carthage. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' thinks this possible, because the first epistle of Clement, and the epistle of Barnabas, were also read at first in some churches, and that these "memoirs" of Justin may in like manner have ceased to retain the high position to which he refers. But there is no proof whatever of such or similar importance ever having been ceded to these books, and the mode in which they are cited is profoundly different.<sup>1</sup>

We are bound to inquire whether, in addition to our Gospels, Justin also used some document like them, which may have formed the basis of one or more of the canonical Gospels.

Whether that were the case or not, the following incidents are recorded by Justin, and we know of no other authority for them but *Matthew's* Gospel: (1) Joseph's suspicion of Mary; (2) the name of Jesus; (3) the visit of the Magi; (4) the massacre at Bethlehem; (5) the descent into Egypt; (6) the order of the temptations; (7) six passages from the sermon on the mount, as given in Matthew only; (8) ch. xxiii. 15, 24; (9) the sign of the Prophet Jonas; (10) the triumphant entry *with the colt*; (11) the calumnious report of the Jews (ch. xxviii. 12—15); and (12) the baptismal formula.

Very few details are peculiar to *Mark*. Some of these, however, Justin refers to; e.g. (1) the name of "Boanerges;" (2) the near approach to a statement (Mark vi. 3) that Christ followed the trade of a carpenter; and (3) ch. ix. 21, that he healed those who were diseased from their birth (cf. also John ix.).

The peculiarities of *Luke* are also quoted by Justin; e.g. (1) the coming of Gabriel to Mary; (2) that John the Baptist's mother was Elisabeth; (3) the census under Cyrenius; (4) that Jesus was thirty years old when he began his ministry; (5) that on his trial he was sent from Pilate to Herod; (6) special passages are quoted from the commission given to the *seventy* disciples; (7) references occur to the Lord's Supper, and the agony in the garden, and to the Resurrection and Ascension, in a form only found in *Luke*.

While these quotations do strongly sustain the thesis that Justin made use of the *synoptic* Gospels, yet, on the other hand, he appears to have studied the genealogy of Mary rather than of Joseph. This may have arisen from his better understanding of the genealogies, and his knowledge of the high probability that they are both of them genealogies of Mary as well as Joseph;<sup>2</sup> or it may have been his conjecture touching the genealogy in *Luke*. It is also clear, from another reference, that he knew that Joseph was of the tribe of Judah. He speaks of a *cave* near Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. But this cave was referred to by Origen at a period when we know that the *synoptic* Gospels were in universal estimation ('Con. Cels.,' i. 51). And ten times over he speaks of the Magi as having come from Arabia rather than from the East. He says all the children of Bethlehem were slain. He declares that, at the baptism of Jesus, "a fire was kindled in the Jordan," and that a voice was heard from heaven, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Now, it should be remembered that an addition

<sup>1</sup> 'Authorship of the Fourth Gospel,' by Dr. Ezra Abbott, pp. 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Lord A. Hervey on 'Genealogies of our Lord.'

to the Old Latin translation, in one of its best manuscripts of Matt. iii. 15 (*a*, Codex Vercellensis), has a passage almost identical. Nor does this stand alone; for Codex D of Luke iii. 22 gives *ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκα σε* for *ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα*, together with *a*, *b*, *c*, *ff*, *l*. Moreover, they are quoted by Lactantius, Hilary, and even Augustine. Whether or not Justin originated the error, we cannot tell; but it is saying too much to make it a reason for holding that he had not seen the Gospels of Matthew, John, or Luke. Twice Justin refers to the 'Acts of Pontius Pilate.' He quotes two sayings not found in the synoptists. These are interesting, and may be paralleled by a few others, some of which are manifestly apocryphal. The references to the 'Acta Pontii Pilati' are supposed, with reason, to have arisen from the assumption that public documents must have contained such records, whether he had ever seen them or not.

Now, if these explanations are insufficient, and granting the possibility of his use of some other narrative, it becomes very difficult to say what this can have been. The most probable is the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' which, nevertheless, is known to have omitted certain most important passages, with which it is certain that Justin was familiar. The 'Gospel of James' states the narrative of the Magi differently, in a manner far less in harmony with the synoptic narrative.

The best way to come to something like a determination of the meaning of Justin's deviations from the evangelic narratives is to observe the degree of accuracy with which he quotes from the Pentateuch and the Old Testament generally. The following table has been made out by Dr. Sanday:—

		Exact.		Slightly variant.		Marked divergence.
Pentateuch	...	18	...	19	...	11
Psalms	...	16 (nine whole psalms)	...	2	...	3
Isaiah	...	25 (ch. lii., liii.)	...	12	...	16
Other great prophets	...	3	...	4	...	11
Minor prophets, etc.	...	2	...	7	...	13
		64		44		54

In the Gospels Justin has made ten exact quotations, twenty-five variant, and thirty-two divergent. The quotations from the Old Testament, reduced to the same standard of comparison, would give ten exact, seven variant, nine divergent. This shows a higher range of variation in the Gospels, and reveals the fact that he was not so familiar with the latter as with the former, that he took more liberty with his text, and that he scarcely regarded them in the same category as the older and venerable Scripture. It is also not impossible that he made use, along with them, of some other documents, which by the time of Irenæus were no longer extant. The positive evidence that he did quote from Matthew's Gospel is very strong in cases where he introduces not merely the words of Jesus, but the comment of the evangelist, as in Matt., xvii. 11—13. Justin quoted, moreover, the *ipsissima verba* of Luke, where these differ from Matthew and Mark.

It has been argued by the author of 'Supernatural Religion' that similar deviations from the synoptic text are found in the Clementine Homilies and in Justin, suggesting that the origin of the double quotation is some other authority rather than that of the canonical Gospels; but the peculiarity to be noted is this—that several of these quotations are given in two forms by the Clementines and Justin, and they "alternately adhere to the canonical text when they differ from each other."

One curious fact is that many of the texts of Justin correspond with what are proved to be corrupted Western texts, such as we find afterwards embodied in Codex Bezae and the Old Latin Version. No critic of any school would base his text on these authorities, but it is certain that they represent a much older text than the age of the codices themselves, and that they point back to a period of corruption of text in the midst of which Justin lived and laboured. That simple fact suggests a much more remote period when such paraphrastic modifications were made. Dr. Sanday inclines to the idea that, if Justin used any other authority than our Gospels, he made use of a *harmony* that was then existing.

Let it be also noted that Justin makes sundry quotations from the LXX.; in doing so he occasionally deviated from it, and, moreover, in the deviation followed the leading of the Gospels. Thus Zech. ix. 9 is twice cited inaccurately. Sometimes he blended

three prophetic passages together, and mixed them up with remarks of his own; once he quoted Zechariah professedly, but the passage is really his own composition, founded on words and thoughts derived from Zechariah, Isaiah, and Joel. The only quotation from Plato is from the 'Timæus,' and consists of words which, though attributed by Plato to Timæus, are cited by Justin as the words of Socrates, and are, moreover, strangely modified. Hence the words that Justin quoted from the Gospels cannot, on any show of fairness, be put down to any other source, simply on the ground of the variation from the text of our Gospels (Norton, 'Genuineness of the Gospels,' vol. i. note E, pp. 306—330; Mangold and Bleek, 'Einleitung,' p. 270).

A further proof that Justin was not aiming at verbal accuracy is that he has not infrequently quoted the same passage more than once with characteristic variations.

The fact that Justin is not more explicit than we have found him to be concerning the documentary sources of his information, is parallel with the circumstance that Tertullian, who knew and said so much in his controversial works about the four Gospels, yet, when writing his 'Apologia' or his 'Ad Nationes,' makes no distinct reference to them whatever; and that Cyprian, in writing in the third century to Demetrian, a heathen, does not once name either the Gospels or evangelists. The same remark may be made about Arnobius, and the very same kind of objection taken to the modification of Gospel narrative by Justin may be brought against Lactantius towards the end of the third century ('Div. Ins.,' v. 3).

Now, if we suppose the existence of even a modified text of the Gospels, and a harmony of the Gospels, to have been in his hand, there can be no reasonable doubt that these Gospels were in existence long before his day—an argument confirmed by the phenomena of the Gospel of Marcion. The bearing of this argument upon the Fourth Gospel, even if no quotation from it could be found at any earlier period, is remarkable. When Irenæus, Theophylact, Clemens Alex., and Tertullian wrote, there is no manner of doubt that the four Gospels were in current use, and held a lofty position in the estimation of the Churches of Gaul, Alexandria, Antioch, and Carthage. Now, the Gospel of John is so different in form, scene, and subject-matter from the first three Gospels, that, if it had been fashioned in the interim between Justin and Irenæus, surely some trace would have been left behind of the difficulty of its reception. Unless it had stood on the highest authority of tradition and long usage, it would never have borne the assault to which it would have been exposed. It must have been believed to be apostolic in its origin, and the trustworthy report of apostolic memorials, or it would never have been accepted as genuine. The oft-quoted discrepancy of style and chronology, etc., therefore becomes a powerful argument to show that the Fourth Gospel must be much older than Justin.

#### IV. THE SPECIFIC EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE EARLY EXISTENCE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

1. *Testimony of Justin Martyr to the Fourth Gospel.* I shall, therefore, proceed with the proof that Justin was acquainted with, and cited, the Fourth Gospel, as well as the other three.

(1) One of the most remarkable quotations is from ch. iii. 3—5; to which Justin refers thus ('Apol.,' i. 61)—

Καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπεν. Ἄν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῇτε, οὐ μὴ εἰσελθῇτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. Ὅτι δὲ καὶ ἀδύνατον εἰς τὰς μήτρας τῶν τεκοσῶν τοὺς ἀπαξ γεννωμένους ἐμβῆναι φανερὸν πᾶσιν ἐστίν.

Let this be compared with the Gospel—

Ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, Ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ. Λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ Νικοδόμος· πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος γεννηθῆναι γέρων ὄν; μὴ δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ δευτέρον εἰσελθεῖν, καὶ γεννηθῆναι;

Many efforts have been made to resist the force of this remarkable coincidence. Schwegler imagined that Justin had the passage Matt. xviii. 3 in his eye, which, however, does not sustain the central point of the comparison between the first and second



birth. He also calls attention to the Clementine 'Homilies,' xi. 26, where some of the same deviations from the Fourth Gospel may be seen, with sundry additions. Baur ('Kanon. Evang.,' 352) supposed the Clementine author drew it from the 'Gospel to the Hebrews.' So also Zeller. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' supposes the author of the Fourth Gospel to have made up his conversation with Nicodemus, partly from this citation of Christ's words. Now, as Mangold observes, it is more probable that the author of the Clementines took his deviations from Justin, and that Justin had the Gospel before him. Let the deviations be considered.

In John's Gospel the question of Nicodemus is not introduced seriously, and receives the solemn rebuke of our Lord. In Justin the remark is clumsily and uselessly introduced, as though it were an important argument of his own, and shows the partial remembrance, the shadow of the inquiry of Nicodemus imperfectly understood and carelessly used. The difference between *eis tās mētras tōn tekousōn* and *eis tēn kōilian*, etc., is thus easily explained.

Again, we are told that when Justin introduces a passage with *ὁ Χριστὸς εἶπεν*, he meant to be verbally accurate. It is perfectly true that the Christian Fathers and Christian writers of note, even down to our day, introduce the substance of our Lord's words rather than the *ipsissima verba*, with similar formulæ of quotation.

But the divergences themselves are noteworthy. Instead of *ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν* Justin has transformed the statement into *ἂν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῇτε*, i.e. the second person plural in direct address, in place of the pronoun with the third person singular; but in explanation it must be remembered that in ver. 7 our Lord has himself used the second person plural; and seeing that Matt. xviii. 3 was also, as Scholten observed, probably in his memory, the alteration or mixing of the two passages is explained. In confirmation of which, Clemens Alex., 'Strom.,' iii. 13, does the very same thing; and not only early Christian writers, but Jeremy Taylor, and doubtless scores of modern writers and preachers, have done the same.

The change from *ἄνωθεν* to *ἀναγεννηθῇτε* is objected to, but without reason. Sufficient authority can be brought to show that *ἄνωθεν* is used for "again" or "anew," as well as "from above," and that the idea of *new* birth was associated with baptism. The word is ambiguous even in the opinion of those Fathers who give it the sense of "from above," and even Nicodemus, by his *δεύτερον*, suggests the same interpretation. But that Justin need not be thought to have had any other authority than the Fourth Gospel for this passage is evident from the fact that the following writers are known thus to have translated the words which they certainly quoted from it: Irenæus ('Frag.,' 35), Athanasius ('De Incarn.,' 14), Basil, Ephrem Syrus, Chrysostom (on 1 Cor. xv. 29), Cyril Alex. (on John iii. 5), and several manuscripts of the Vulgate.

The variation of "cannot see" into "by no means enter" is partly an echo or representation of the ver. 5 *οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν*. Dr. Ezra Abbott has examined quotations made of this verse by forty-two authors, and found no fewer than sixty-nine examples of similar deviations from strict accuracy. Interchanges of "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" are found in all periods of Christian literature. All the deviations of Justin are frequently repeated in later authors, at periods when the Fourth Gospel was undeniably accepted as Holy Scripture. It is well-nigh beyond belief, in spite of the variations, that Justin had not before him ch. iii.

(2) Even Hilgenfeld and Keim think that Justin must be quoting ('Dial.,' 88) from ch. i. 20, 23 (cf. ch. iii. 28), where the Baptist is said to have described *himself* as "not the Christ, but *φωνῇ βοῶντος*." The synoptists quote Isaiah's prophecy as fulfilled in John. Justin learned from the Fourth Gospel that the source of this reference was the consciousness of the Baptist.

(3) In 'Apol.,' i. 63, Justin says that the Jews are "upbraided by Christ himself, as knowing neither the Father nor the Son." It is scarcely credible that he had not before him ch. viii. 19 and xvi. 3.

(4) 'Dial.,' c. 49, and 'Apol.,' i. 22: Justin says that Christ healed those who were *ἐκ γενετῆς πηροὺς*, which has its most natural explanation in a reference to ch. ix. A similar passage or phrase (*πηροὺς*, not *τυφλός*) is found in 'Apost. Const.,' v. 7, § 17, where there is certain reference to ch. ix.

(5) 'Apol.,' i. 13: Christ was *eis τοῦτο γεννηθέντα*, with the *eis τοῦτο γεγέννημαι* of ch. xviii. 37.

(6) 'Dial.,' i. 56, with ch. viii. 28, 29.

(7) 'Apol.,' i. 66: "We were taught that the bread and wine were the flesh and blood of that Jesus *who was made flesh*." We can scarcely believe that Justin had not seen ch. i. 14 and vi. 51—56.

(8) 'Apol.,' i. 60, and 'Dial.,' 91: he refers to the brazen serpent as typical of the Crucifixion—a comparison found in ch. iii. 14.

(9) In the one place where he uses the expression, "the *apostles* have written," he says it of Jesus "coming up from the water, and the Holy Spirit as a dove alighting upon him" (cf. Matt. iii. 16; ch. i. 32, 33).

(10) But the decided proof to most minds of Justin's familiarity with the Fourth Gospel is that he has received and expanded the doctrine of the Logos, as found in the prologue of that Gospel.

Thus ('Apol.,' i. 23) he writes, "Jesus Christ is in the proper sense the only Son begotten of God, being his Word (*Λόγος*) and firstborn Power." "He created and ordained all things through him" (ii. 6; cf. i. 63 and ii. 13); also *ὁ Λόγος ὅς τίνα τροπον σαρκοποιήθεις ἑνθρώπος γέγονεν* (i. 5; ii. 6). "*Ἀνθρώπος γενόμενος* is a phrase descriptive of the *Λόγος* in a great variety of passages. The use of *Λόγος* in the same sense as in the prologue is not denied by any one. Take 'Dial.,' 105: "I have previously shown that he was the only Son of the Father of all things, his Logos and Power, born of himself, and afterwards made *man* (*ἑνθρώπος γενόμενος διὰ τῆς παρθένου*) of the Virgin, as we have learned from the *memoirs*." Volkmar has yielded to the evidence derived from this quotation, though Hilgenfeld thinks that the clause, "as we have learned," refers only to the previous part of the sentence; and then adopts the speculation that the author of the Fourth Gospel, so immeasurably superior to Justin, had absolutely quoted from him. Surely "the prologue of John is the primordial revelation of the Logos in its immediate majesty, the writings of Justin are the first attempts at a rational analysis of the contents of the revelation." The opponents of the Johannine authorship have tried to account for it by supposing that Justin derived his ideas of the Incarnation and "man-becoming" of the Logos, who created all things, from other sources.

Now, Theophilus, Irenæus, Clemens Alex., and Tertullian held the same or similar ideas and commented upon them at length, and made no secret whatever of having drawn their ideas from the Fourth Gospel. Why should not Justin be allowed to have done the same? 'In Dial.,' c. 48, he is enlarging on the pre-existence of Christ as being God and being born of a virgin, and indicates to Trypho his view on this subject as having been one "taught by himself." It cannot be said that he could have learned this from the synoptists. Whether true or not, it is in the Gospel of John alone that Justin could have found this teaching described as Christ's own. It is true that in the Book of Proverbs, in the Wisdom of Solomon, and in Ecclesiasticus there is a lofty description of Wisdom as the creative energy of God, hardly though approximatively personified, and poetically drawn as an agency or form of Divine energy and counsel; but there is no hint of this Wisdom having become man. She does "sweetly order all things," and is "*ἀπαύρασμα* of the everlasting light," but nothing could be less like the teaching of the Old Testament than that this Wisdom was born of a virgin, and was the Christ of God.

The discussion of the relation of Philo to the author of the Fourth Gospel will be considered in sect. VII. 2. We have here simply to consider the question—Did Justin derive his Logos-doctrine from Philo, with the assistance of the additional idea that Jesus Christ was an incarnation of the Logos, without authoritative help from John's Gospel? or did he borrow it and develop it directly from the Fourth Gospel? Albrecht Thoma ('Die Genesis des Johannes-Evang.,' etc., p. 824) has maintained the first hypothesis; though he does not deny that Justin may have seen the Gospel, he suggests that he treated it with the same indifference that he manifested to Paul's writings.

Philo speaks of *Λόγος* as "reason:" "The reason which is diffused among all beings in common." He treats the *Λόγος* as the attribute of the Divine Being, or a mode of his activity. He calls it *Ἀρχάγγελος*, *Ἀρχιερεύς*, *Τίς*, *Πρωτόγονος αὐτοῦ Λόγος*, *Δεύτερος Θεός*. He was eclectic in his notion and nomenclature—that which as a Jew he called *angels*, as a Stoic he called *causes*, as a Platonist *ideas*, as a popular writer for Greeks he called *dæmons*, in one place he called *ἀθάνατοι Λόγοι*. Moreover, Philo never identified the *Λόγος* with the Messianic idea, of which he says very little. The term *Λόγος* in

Philo scarcely preserves the ambiguity which it has in Plato and other Greek writers. It has the meaning of "reason," or *λόγος ἐνδιδθετος*, rather than "word," or *λόγος προφορικὸς*, and when Philo referred to the creative "Word," he used the other term *ῥήμα*, or even a combination of the two, the *λόγος-ῥήμα*.

In Philo, the God who acts by the *Λόγος* is absolutely removed from all contact with the world, and thus is profoundly different from the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as displayed in the Fourth Gospel, and, more than this, the bare idea of incarnation is abhorrent to the Philonian metaphysics.

The notions of God that Justin entertained are of the most supersensuous kind. He is unspeakable and unnamable, but he is almighty; he is "the Father of all" ('Dial.,' 108); "the Maker of the whole" (ibid., c. 60); he is the providential Ruler of all ('Apol.,' i. 15. 8), "merciful and gracious."

Several critics have drawn a series of contrasts between the positions of Philo, Justin, and "John," and particularly emphasized as Justin's doctrine the origination, constitution, and begetting of the Logos in time, or at the creation of the world, rather than as a personal coexistent Deity "with God" before all worlds. The Logos (in Justin) is said to be a "second God"—"God because from God (*Verbum Deus, quia ex Deo*)."<sup>1</sup> He is directly subordinate to the supreme Deity, because derived. He is *μονογενής* and *πρωτότοκος*, and after the manifestation in man, after he was made man (*γένεσεν ἄνθρωπος*), and that then he is called *γέννημα*. Also emphasis is laid upon the fact that, instead of the peculiar Johannine phrase, *ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*, Justin uses *ἄνθρωπος* instead of *σὰρξ*, and *σαρκωποιθεὶς* instead of *σὰρξ ἐγένετο*. However the idea of the incarnation of the Logos may have arisen, the mode of its expression is very closely allied, if not identical, in both writers. If Justin had been more alive to the teaching of Paul (whose letters must have been in general circulation long before Justin wrote), he might neither have shrunk from Paul's use of *σὰρξ* in the sense of *ἄνθρωπος*, nor called attention to the subordination of the *Divine* nature of Christ. However, the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse alike lay emphasis upon the subordination of the *Son*, and seeing that the Son is the Only Begotten of the Father, and in the bosom of the Father before his incarnation, *ΛΟΓΟΣ* and *ΥΙΟΣ* are terms which, in the evangelist's mind essay to set forth the same immanent, eternal, and active relation of an hypostasis that is essentially one with God, though derived from him. Furthermore, it is open to question whether Justin did designate the Logos as *γέννημα* in time. The passage to which many critics, anxious to shut off the influence of the Fourth Gospel from Justin refer, is 'Dial. cum Trypho,' 62: "But this offspring (*γέννημα*) which was put forth from the Father was with the Father before all created things (*πάντων τῶν ποιημάτων*)."<sup>2</sup> The "offspring" was not an "attribute" of God, and Justin seeks to show that this Logos was the Person to whom God spake, saying, "Let us make man" (see 'Apol.,' ii. c. 6). "His Son, who alone is properly called Son, the Logos, being with God and being begotten before his works, when in the beginning he created and set in order all things through him, is called Christ." Confused in expression, and capable of different interpretations, this passage identifies the Son with the Logos, and discerns the Logos as actively accomplishing the creation of all things. He avows partially an agreement with Plato on these very lines in the 'Address to the Greeks,' but the deviation from the great affirmations of John's prologue, in favour of Philo, cannot be proved.

Dr. Davidson seeks to show that Justin's Christ is a portrait drawn from the synoptic narrative or tradition; e.g. that Justin appears to regard our Lord's public ministry as lasting one year; that he represents Jesus as apprehended on the day of the Passover; that he does not adduce passages from the prologue in proof of Christ's pre-existence; and ignores the miracles of the Fourth Gospel, the sending of the Paraclete, and the great saying, "A new commandment," etc. These observations are well worth pondering, but we might as well go through the whole Gospel with a similar string of omissions. Take a similar case: Because a writer of the present day quotes a poem of the commencement of the century, but does not refer to or appears in ignorance of many other of the *same* poet's productions, we are not, therefore, justified in concluding that the quotations that he does not make are proof of the non-existence of the said poetry at that date. The question here does not turn on the accurate or scholarly use of the Fourth Gospel by Justin, but on the simple fact that he had seen it or read any portion of it.

Dr. Abbott (City of London School), in two articles in the *Modern Review*, 1882, endeavours to minimize the effect of the quotations on which we have commented, by emphasizing their verbal disagreement with the text of John; and, following the line of Dr. Davidson and A. Thoma, he shows that there are places in Justin's argument where, if the martyr had believed in the *authoritative* value of John's Gospel, he would have cited it as far more apposite than the passage from the prophets of the Old Testament, or from the synoptists that he does cite. It is very remarkable that Justin should not have quoted this Gospel when endeavouring to prove the pre-existence of Christ; but we cannot say what a writer of the second century would think most convincing, and the argument *e silentio* is very perilous.

2. In addition to this testimony, let us review the confirmatory evidence which undeniably establishes the existence of the Fourth Gospel between Justin and Irenæus.

(1) HERACLEON. We have spoken at length of Irenæus, whose evidence establishes the reverence paid to the Gospel when he wrote his chief work, A.D. 180, but in this work ('Adv. Hær.' ii. 4) he speaks of one, Heracleon, a Gnostic, whose doctrines of æons is combined with that of Ptolemæus (cf. Hippolytus, 'Ref. Hær.' vi. 35 and 29). Heracleon must have lived, then, before Irenæus. He was a disciple of Valentinus, the great poet and genius of the Gnostic schools. Now, if that fact can be established—and nothing seems clearer—then John's Gospel must have been in wide circulation, and held in extraordinary reverence by persons both within and outside the Church; for it can be shown that Heracleon actually wrote a complete commentary on John's Gospel, to which Origen set himself to reply in later times. "Ah, great God!" says Volkmar, "if between A.D. 125 and 155 a commentary was composed on John's Gospel, such as that of which Origen has preserved considerable extracts, what yet remains to be discussed? It is very certain that it is all over with the critical thesis of the composition of the Fourth Gospel in the middle of the second century."

(2) TATIAN. Tatian, a disciple of Justin, between A.D. 166 and 170, wrote his 'Discourse to the Greeks,' and a work the name of which is preserved by Eusebius, τὸ Διατεσσάρων—a "patchwork," or "combination," or perhaps "harmony," of "four Gospels." What four Gospels were they? Eusebius does not say, but he calls them "the Gospels," and that is sufficient. Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' iv. 29: "Tatian put together, I know not how, a sort of patchwork or combination of the Gospels, and called it the DIATESSARON,<sup>1</sup> which is current with some." The author of 'Supernatural Religion' argues from this, unadvisedly, that Eusebius had never seen the document.

That one of them was the fourth is probable, because in the 'Discourse to the Greeks' we find a quotation from ch. i. 3, 5 and iv. 24. The exact words are, *καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἄρα τὸ εἰρημένον*, 'Ἡ σκοτία τὸ φῶς οὐ καταλαμβάνει. Altogether too remarkable to be explained away.

Further, Theodoret ('Hær. Fab.' i. 20) tells us this "harmony" was a defective performance, omitting the genealogies, denying the reality of the body of Christ, and that he was Son of David according to the flesh. He says that he found (about A.D. 420) two hundred copies of this work in his churches in his small diocese of Cyrus, in Syria, and that the faithful did not discern the mischievous character of the compilation, and that he, Theodoret, substituted for them copies of the four Gospels. [This simple fact shows to what an enormous extent copies of the Gospels may have been diffused throughout the Christian world, and is used by Norton (*loc. cit.*, c. 1) to defend his calculation that not fewer than sixty thousand copies of the Gospels must have existed in the fifth century.]

Victor of Capua, in the sixth century, speaks of Tatian's work as a *διὰ πέντε* instead of a *διὰ τεσσάρων*. But surely Eusebius of the fourth century and Theodoret of the fifth century are rather better authorities than Victor. A Syrian writer, Bar-Salibi, in the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Salmon ('Introduction to the New Testament,' p. 98) has quoted an interesting communication from Professor Mahaffy, illustrating the meaning of the word *διὰ τεσσάρων*. There were, says he, three combinations of notes in music which were regarded as *concord*s: *διὰ πασῶν*, the whole octave; *διὰ πέντε*, the first and fifth; and *διὰ τεσσάρων*, the first and fourth; all the rest of the intervals were *discord*s. This he explains scientifically as correct, although our modern methods of tuning instruments have created a harmony between thirds as well. The term *διατεσσάρων* may have been incorrectly used when transferred from music to literature, to denote a harmony of four.

twelfth century, says that Ephrem Syrus wrote a commentary on Tatian's harmony and that it began with ch. i. 1.

So startling a fact has been vehemently repudiated by the opponents of the Fourth Gospel, and certainly the testimony appears late and dubious; but see here Lightfoot's (article in *Contemporary Review*, 1877) argument in defence of Bar-Salibi. Confirmation of this testimony really became available in 1836, though unnoticed by Western scholars; for in that year it was found that an Armenian Version of Ephrem's Commentary actually existed, and the Mechitarist Fathers in Venice published it. In 1876 Mæssinger translated this into Latin, and Dr. Ezra Abbott called attention to it in 1880. Dr. Zahn has published an elaborate dissertation on the subject. With this stimulus, Dr. Wace gave an interesting account and analysis of this commentary (*Expositor*, 1882), and of Dr. Zahn's theories concerning it. Zahn thinks that the *Διατεσσάπων* was itself written in Syriac, that the commentary consisted of a series of homilies upon a harmony which in the Syriac Churches, in the fourth century, assumed the place of the Gospels in the Greek Churches. This commentary reveals the text upon which it was based, and we find that it corresponds with Victor of Capua's statement, though the latter had restored some passages which, according to Theodoret, Tatian had omitted. This remarkable document begins, as Bar-Salibi had said, with ch. i. 1, etc., and contains numerous passages from the Gospel, even of ch. xxi., and bases its chronology upon that of John rather than on that of the synoptics.

The only question is—Have we any reason for doubting that the harmony on which Ephrem Syrus commented was Tatian's, as Bar-Salibi asserted? Might it have been a harmony made by Ammonius of Alexandria? Against this the strong reason appears that Ammonius's harmony made Matthew's Gospel the basis, whereas there is no hint of this in Ephrem's commentary. If we can rely upon the existence of the "harmony" of Tatian (a disciple of Justin), and that the Fourth Gospel was an essential element of the *Διατεσσάπων*, the debate as to Justin's quotations is closed.

(3) THE MURATORIAN FRAGMENT.<sup>1</sup> Muratori, in 1740 (*Antiquitates Italicae Medii Ævi*, vol. iii.), published a manuscript at that time in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, formerly in the monastery of Bobbio, in order to prove the inaccuracy of early copyists; but he and others at once saw that the fragment was of importance in determining the canon of the New Testament. The manuscript begins abruptly, and is broken off in the middle of a sentence; it is written in corrupt Latin, which is probably a poor translation of an original work in Greek. The writer says that "Hermas has very recently, and in our days, written the 'Shepherd,' while Pius, his brother, was Bishop of Rome." Pius died about the middle of the second century, his episcopate extending from A.D. 142 to 147, and if so, the composition of the unknown author can scarcely be put later than A.D. 160 or 170. Tregelles says, "Its evidence is none the less trustworthy from its being a blundering and illiterate transcript of a rough and rustic translation of a Greek original." With him, Maugold and Hilgenfeld agree. It is one of the first attempts we possess to frame a canon or list of books of the New Testament. We have to make sundry conjectures which may turn out to be false, with reference, e.g., to the Epistle to the Hebrews; but its testimony as to the existence of the Gospels is important, seeing that it mentions forged epistles in order to denounce them, and discriminates between the value of The 'Shepherd' of Hermas and the sacred books. Everything in our present question depends on the date. If "nuperime temporibus nostris" be taken in their ordinary sense, it cannot be dated much after the death of Pius, and all the other references tally with this. Desperate hypotheses have been made to avoid the inconvenient force of the testimony. Some have suggested that the passage which involves the date is an interpolation. Of course that cannot be disproved. The mere fact of mutilation does not in the least suggest interpolation; nor is there any appearance of its being a gloss. It is questionable whether any mention of Matthew and Mark was made in the original document, because that portion of the manuscript is mutilated; but, as far as our present contention is concerned, that is unimportant. What

<sup>1</sup> 'Canonicity,' by A. H. Charteris, D.D., where the original form and the emended text are seen, pp. 3—8; 'Canon of the New Testament,' by Westcott, p. 557, etc.; 'Bible in the Church,' by Westcott, p. 113, etc.; Lightfoot, *Contemporary Review*, October, 1875; Holtzmann, 'Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das N. T.,' p. 143; Reuss, 'History of New Testament,' § 310.

is said with reference to Luke and John is as follows. It is noticeable that the way in which Luke is introduced shows that it was regarded by the writer as the Third Gospel.

"The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, that physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul has taken him (*secundum* or *secum*) as his second [or, 'helper,' as one studious, anxious for the truth or right?], wrote to the best of his judgment (*ex opinione*, equivalent to *καθὼς ἔδοξεν αὐτῷ*, Luke i. 3), nor, nevertheless, had he himself seen the Lord in the flesh—and this same, so far as he was able to ascertain, and so he began to speak from the birth of John."

There are no new facts to be gathered from this; but it is clear that the writer is speaking of what was known, in the Church, as the Third Gospel, and thus throws the composition of the work much further back, confirming all that we have said about the independent proof of the precedence of the Third Gospel to that of Marcion. Then the document proceeds—

"Of the fourth of the Gospels (the author) was John, one of the disciples" (*i.e.* to distinguish him from John the Baptist, to whom he had just made reference). "[He wrote it] at the request of his fellow-disciples and bishops, to whom he said, 'Fast with me from to-day until the third day, and whatsoever shall have been revealed to any one, we will tell you.' On the same night it was revealed to Andrew, (one) of the apostles, that, aided by the revision of all (*recognoscentibus cunctis*), John should describe all things in his own name (on his own authority); and so, though various principles are taught in each of the Gospels, it makes no difference to the faith of believers, since in all of them all things are declared by one ruling Spirit, concerning the nativity, concerning the passion, the resurrection [of Christ], the conversation with his disciples, and his double (*gemino*) advent. First he was condemned in his humility, then, secondly, illustrious in royal power, which will occur (*quod futurum est*). What wonder is it, then, that John so constantly should bring it forth, even in his Epistles, and mentioning details, should say as from himself alone, 'What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, these things have we written to you' ? For so he professes that he was not only an eye-witness, but also a hearer, and, moreover, a writer in order (*scriptorem . . . per ordinem*, an historian) of all the wonderful things of our Lord."

Because of the air of legend that the writer of this fragment has thrown round the composition of the Gospel, some of our recent critics discount its value; but the very fact that Andrew and the other apostles should conjoinedly have been supposed to testify to the truth of John's communications, throws the date of the composition of what was then a well-known work into a remote past. The statement, moreover, corresponds with the concluding words of the Gospel itself.

The value of this document is that it makes it impossible for us to suppose that Justin could have had any other document before him than that which we thus show very shortly after Justin's death to have been called "the Fourth Gospel," and is declared to be written by an eye-witness, etc., and by the author of the Epistle which bears his name.

Holtzmann contends mainly that the principle on which books are approved or condemned throughout this archaic fragment is their acceptance by what was then becoming recognized as the Apostolic Catholic Church. Davidson suggests that the account of the origin of the Fourth Gospel shows that its "apostolicity" was still open to grave doubt.

It ought to be here stated that Dr. Salmon is disposed to attribute the authorship of this document to Caius, Presbyter of Rome about A.D. 200, and therefore, valuable as it would still be, it would have no bearing on the quotations of Justin. Reuss, however, in 1884 (*ib. cit.*), repudiates the authorship of Caius.

(4) PAPIAS.<sup>1</sup> These testimonies of Papias concern more closely the first two synoptic Gospels, though they are not without interest in their bearing on the Fourth Gospel.

First, who *was* he? and what records throw light upon the date of his episcopate or death, or the value of his testimonies or his silences?

<sup>1</sup> Article by Archdeacon Farrar, *Expositor*, November, 1881, very important, considering the extraordinary use made by Keim ('Life of Jesus of Nazara,' i. 207, Eng. trans.), of the references of Papias to one who is supposed to be John the presbyter; *Contemporary Review*, Bishop Lightfoot, vol. xxvi.; Dr. Salmon, 'Introduction to the New Testament,' p. 100, etc.

Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 36) says, "While Polycarp was in Asia, and was Bishop of Smyrna, Papias was well known as Bishop of the Church in Hierapolis, a man well skilled in all manner of learning, and well acquainted with 'the Scriptures.'" In iii. 39 Eusebius again speaks of him as *σφόδρα σμικρὸς ὃν τὸν νοῦν*, as being intellectually small or weak. These apparently contradictory passages are not difficult to reconcile. Eusebius was a strenuous ante-millenarian, but Papias, according to certain extracts given by the historian from his last work, entitled 'An Exposition (or Expositions) of the Oracles of our Lord,' recorded some extreme chiliastic views based on the literal interpretation of some apocryphal sayings of Christ. These were enough to justify Eusebius's view of his intellect, while at the same time he might, after seeing the care displayed in his 'Expositions,' and the reputation he had won, have admitted his learning. Drs. Dryasdust and Syntax may be even at the present day small men. It would be a most wonderful event if these 'Expositions' of Papias were discovered, as he was undoubtedly a link between the apostles and their immediate followers, and Irenæus. Now, Irenæus ('Adv. Hær.' v. 33. 4) speaks of him as a man of the olden time, and a hearer (*ἀκουστής*) of John and Polycarp. Later tradition makes Irenæus a "hearer" of Papias, as well as Polycarp; and it is more than probable that Irenæus, when in Laodicea, saw and conversed with the old man at Hierapolis. We do not know for certain when he died. The accounts differ as to the date of his martyrdom, and that of Polycarp, between 155-6 and 165-7. There can be little doubt that, if he were an "ancient man" when Irenæus saw him, he must have lived between the last quarter of the first and the first two quarters of the second century—between A.D. 70 and 150. Moreover, Eusebius himself, in an earlier work, the 'Chronicon,' does not scruple to say that Papias was a *hearer* of John the apostle—a statement undoubtedly confirmed by Irenæus ('Adv. Hær.' v. 33). The special and wonderful event which he recorded as having learned from the daughters of Philip the apostle (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 39), shows that he must have lived contemporaneously with those who had known the apostles and their immediate associates and followers.

One very important fragment of his last work is preserved by Eusebius (iii. 39 or 40), which has abundant bearing on the authenticity of Matthew and Mark's Gospel, and also inferentially on that of the Fourth Gospel. The quotation is made by Eusebius from the fourth book of Papias's 'Expositions,' on the authority of Irenæus that Papias wrote five books. Eusebius adds that Papias, in the preface to these books, does not claim to be a hearer or eye-witness of the holy apostles, but received the doctrines of the faith from their intimate friends.

"I shall not hesitate or scruple for your advantage to set down, side by side with my interpretations, whatsoever things I at any time well (or rightly) learned or rightly or well recorded or remembered, solely affirming (*διαβεβαιουμένος*) the truth about them. For I was in the habit of taking delight (not as the many) in those saying (*λέγουσιν*) many things, but in those teaching the truth, nor in those who remembered the teaching of strangers, but in those who remembered the commandments which were given by the Lord to our faith, and in those that proceeded *παράγονόμενοι* from the truth itself (cf. ch. xiv. 6, "I am the Truth"). But also if at any time any one chanced to come who had been a follower of (*παρηκολουθηκώς*; cf. Luke i. 3) the elders, I used to inquire about the discourses (or words) of the elders,<sup>1</sup> what Andrew and what Peter said, *εἶπεν*, or what Philip or what Thomas or James, or what John or Matthew, or any one of the disciples (*μαθητῶν*) said, and what Aristion and the elder John, the disciples of the Lord, say (*λέγουσι*). For I did not account myself so much indebted to what comes from books as to that which comes from the living and abiding voice."

Eusebius then calls attention to the double reference to the elder John, and concludes from it that "Aristion and the elder John" were living in Papias's day, and that he, "the elder," was the probable author of the Apocalypse. He confirms this supposition by the statement that some assert that there were *two* who bore this name; that there were "two tombs in Ephesus, and that both are called John's even to this day."

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, 'Chronicon ad Olymp.' 220: *Ἰωάννην τὸν Θεολόγον καὶ ἀπστολον Εἰρηναῖος καὶ ἄλλοι ἱστοροῦσι παραμένειν τῷ βίῳ ἕως τῶν χρόνων Τραϊανῶ μεθ' ὃν Παππίας Ἱεραπολίτης καὶ Πολύκαρπος Σμύρνης ἐπίσκοπος ἀκουσάτι αὐτοῦ ἐγενώριζοντο.*

<sup>2</sup> It is highly important to notice whom he meant by "the elders," because Eusebius undervalues this testimony, and contradicts the statements of Irenæus.

Now, this "elder John" is supposed by some to be the author of the Second and Third Epistles of John. Keim has urged, in his 'Jesus of Nazara,' that this second John is author of the Gospel, the John alone known to Papias or to Polycarp; and he denies that John, son of Zebedee, was ever at Ephesus at all.

Eusebius further dilates on his literal millenarianism, and treats him as the mistaken author of these foolish opinions, thinking that Irenæus was led astray in this direction by the antiquity of the man. Keim has no right to follow Eusebius in a dogmatic assertion that Papias knew nothing of the elders themselves; for his first assertion is that he had learned and remembered much of their instructions. It is very noteworthy that he calls Peter, Thomas, Andrew, John, and Matthew, "elders;" and, though he mentions a John over again as "the elder John" with Aristion as "disciples of the Lord," it is by no means certain that he is referring to another person at all. It is interesting to observe that he first refers to second-hand information derived from the group of elders, and then, as though Aristion and the elder John were still living, he adds, "what they say." If John the apostle lived till Trajan's time, this is perfectly comprehensible; and the passage is a very powerful confirmation of the hypothesis so well maintained by Archdeacon Farrar, that the Presbyter John is a mere invention of Eusebius, who is, after all, the only source of the tradition worth any consideration, and that he based his opinion on the loose story of the two tombs of John in Ephesus.

The testimony which Papias gave as to the synoptic narratives has been discussed and argued from, as though it were a detailed treatise; and two solitary phrases which he used have afforded matter for enormous debate. (a) He says that "Matthew composed τὰ λόγια in the Hebrew dialect, and each one interpreted them as he was able." From this sentence it has been concluded that Matthew merely edited "discourses" of our Lord, and that this Hebrew work is the foundation of our canonical "Matthew," and different from it. It is, however, clear from New Testament usage of the word that we have no right to limit the λόγια to the discourses. The word is used for "oracles," whether "sayings" or narratives (Rom. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12; 2 Clem. 13), and may be regarded as nearly equivalent to our modern usage of the word "gospel." Papias, in this brief sentence, does not say that Matthew had not written his Greek form of the Gospel, but, as Charteris says, "It may be fairly argued that now the time for haphazard translations was passed."<sup>1</sup> (b) He gives, on the authority of "the elder John"—and this is profoundly impressive if the elder John be none other than the venerable apostle—the well-known story of Mark being the interpreter of Peter. He comments, therefore, on the authority of Mark's work, its accuracy, and his scrupulous attention to the facts. There is, however, one word in this passage on which much controversy has been spent—οὐ μέντοι τάξει—"not indeed in order; he wrote the things that were said and done by our Lord." It has been urged that Mark's Gospel is the most chronological in order of the three synoptic narratives. Judging by the various harmonies that have been made, the order of Mark is that which is more often adhered to by Matthew and Luke, and moreover their respective adhesions to Mark's "order," when they differ from one another, are far more numerous than their combined deviations from Mark. That may be true. But does Papias mean by τάξει "chronological order"? All those who are anxious to separate the canonical Matthew and Mark from the documents to which Papias refers hold that it does. Even Dr. Sanday here seems to yield to the pressure, and to agree with the author of 'Supernatural Religion.' But consult Ebrard's 'Gospel History,' where he endeavours to set forth the sequences of Mark's narrative, and shows that he is guided by the resolve to exhibit in a series of tableaux the leading momenta of the life of Christ. Even if Mark's succession of events best explains the differences in arrangement seen in Matthew and Luke, it does not follow that he has placed the details of his narrative any more than they have in true chronological sequence.

The supposition that this testimony about Mark came from the "elder John," who is none other than the son of Zebedee, and who alone approaches a full exhibition of chronological outline, will throw light on the οὐ μέντοι τάξει. As compared with the Fourth Gospel, which we cannot suppose Papias did not know, Mark's might well bear this character.

If John the elder be the author of the Second and Third Epistles, we cannot doubt

<sup>1</sup> Alex. Roberts's 'Discussions on the Gospels,' p. 388.



that they are by the same author as that of the First Epistle, from which, Eusebius also states, Papias quoted, giving another reason for the identification of the two Johns. Though Eusebius is really the author of the tradition of the two Johns, yet he does not hesitate to say ('Chronicon,' *loc. cit.*) that Papias had been a hearer of John the apostle, in accordance with the already-quoted testimony of Irenæus to the same effect. The other testimonies to the supposed existence of the presbyter vanish on approach. The hypothesis that John the presbyter was the author of the Apocalypse, and none other than the exile of Patmos, and who could with authority address the seven Churches of Asia, is incompatible with John the apostle's residence in Asia altogether, and so recklessly sets aside a wide and cogent tradition.

The greatest puzzle in connection with the passage is the mention of *Aristion* in the same breath with the *elder John*. Of this name we elsewhere find no other trace.

Renan and others have adopted different conjectures to get rid of the reference to these two men as disciples of the Lord. Godet makes the suggestion that the "two other disciples" mentioned in ch. xxi. may be Aristion and Presbyter John. Dr. Farrar and Krenkel independently make the supposition that *Aristion* conceals some well-known name; and since Polycrates said that at this time John and *Philip* were the two "great lights of Asia," it is not impossible that *Aristion* is the name by which Papias was accustomed to speak of him. "What Papias meant to say was that, long before he wrote his book, it had been his habit to gather all he could about the statements of the apostles, whom he calls 'elders,' and among them the statements of John, from those who had seen the elders; and that he also took notes of the living 'oracles,' furnished to him *directly* by Aristion (who was well known to Papias's readers), and even—which is the reason why he keeps the name to the last as being the fact which he most wished to emphasize—by 'John the elder;' the same John, *ὁ πρεσβυτης*, the only John of whom any one knew anything, who so long survived his brother apostles, and to whose *indirect* testimony Papias has just referred" (Farrar, *Expositor*, vol. ii. 2nd series, p. 343, etc.).

Although, in the exceedingly brief extant fragments of Papias, no quotation is made from John's Gospel, yet it is stated by Eusebius that Papias quoted (as Polycarp did) from the First Epistle, and likewise from Peter's Epistle, which makes it probable that he was referring to John's Gospel and Epistle, just as he referred to Mark's Gospel and Peter's Epistle.

Before leaving Papias, it is incumbent to notice that Irenæus (v. 36) gives an explanation of ch. xiv. 1, "In my Father's house are many mansions," as one given by the presbyters of Asia Minor, in the number of which Papias occupied a chief place.

The so-called silence of Eusebius concerning the testimonies of more ancient writers than himself to the existence of the Gospels has a curious bearing on this subject (see Lightfoot, *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxvi.). It all turns on the principle adopted by Eusebius in these references. Thus, 'Hist. Eccl.' iii. 3, "He wishes to point out what ecclesiastical writers made use of the *disputed* books, and of which of them, then some (*τινῶν*) of the things which have been said about the *διδασκαλοῦμενοι*, and all that has been said about those *which are not so*." He did not for a moment aim at a complete inventory of *all* that was said by the earlier writers about the *διδασκαλοῦμενοι*. That was taken for granted; e.g. he says nothing about Irenæus's and Origen's quotations from John. Nobody doubted the Fourth Gospel in the time of Eusebius. The fact that Papias quoted the First Epistle of John and the First Epistle of Peter is to the point; and the very fact that Eusebius does not refer to citations made by Papias from the Gospel of John goes far to prove that Eusebius knew that Papias quoted it largely.

The conclusions we draw are that his personal acquaintance with John and Polycarp gives extraordinary importance to the testimony which Irenæus bears to the Gospel as well as to him, and connects the apostolic period with that in which the quotations from and admissions of John's Gospel are abundant, indubitable, and universally conceded.

3. *The testimony of the APOSTOLIC FATHERS.* (1) POLYCARP. Another evidence of high antiquity is given in the solemn quotation from the First Epistle of John in Polycarp's Epist. to Phil., c. vii. The evidence for the identification of authorship of the Epistle and Gospel is as strong as any internal evidence can be (see sect. VII. 5. (3) d). Dr. Davidson has strenuously disputed it by calling attention to differences of doctrine between

them, which are in fact microscopic. But the transfusion of 1 John iv. 2, 3 into the following passage is convincing to many sceptical minds: "For every one who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is antichrist; and whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross is of the devil." This becomes more striking from the fact that in c. vi. Polycarp is referring to the apostles who preached the gospel to us.

Volkmar suggests that Polycarp's epistle to the Philippians may have been in the hands of the writer of the First Epistle of John. But it should not be forgotten that Papias, a companion of Polycarp, made use of the First Epistle (according to Eusebius), which renders it eminently improbable that the Epistle of John was written after the time of Polycarp and Papias. The superiority and independence of the First Epistle of John are conspicuous throughout.

Polycarp's letter shows that it must have been written after Ignatius left him, and before the news of his martyrdom reached him at Smyrna. It has been said, if Polycarp quoted the First Epistle, why should he not have quoted the Gospel? One might as well ask why he did not, in the short letter, quote 1 Corinthians, or Job, or Jeremiah, or Daniel, or the 'Phædo'! The authenticity of Polycarp's letter is placed beyond dispute by Lightfoot (article, *Contemporary Review*, 1877, and 'Apostolic Fathers,' part ii. vol. i. and vol. iii.), and the fact that this letter is interfused and saturated with Pauline thought is in itself a standing contradiction of the theory of the existence of hostile parties within the bosom of the apostolic company. The one ground on which Polycarp's epistle has been questioned is that it sustains the authenticity of the Ignatian letters, which had been referred to a forger of the close of the century; but if the Ignatian Epistles are proved to be authentic, the one stumbling-block has been taken away. This Zahn and Lightfoot have done so much to accomplish.

(2) CLEMENS ROMANUS AND BARNABAS. It is more than possible that the epistle of Clement of Rome was written before the Fourth Gospel, therefore we do not expect to find traces of the presence of that Gospel in this epistle. The same may possibly be true of the epistle of "Barnabas." The antiquity of the latter has been accepted by some critics because they find in it no trace of the Fourth Gospel. Volkmar, Riggenbach (and cf. Dr. Milligan's art. "Barnabas:" 'Dictionary of Christian Biography'). Keim has, however, strongly maintained the presence of the Johannine thought throughout the epistle, and contends that the root-ideas of the epistle cannot be found either in the Epistle to the Hebrews or in Paul's Epistles, but only in the Fourth Gospel. If so, we are driven back to the very commencement of the second, or the close of the first, century for such recognition of the Fourth Gospel. Keim thinks there is specific reference to the building of the temple in the reign of Hadrian, about the year A.D. 120, at latest A.D. 130.

If the epistle were genuine, it must have been written as early as between A.D. 70 and 79, as many seem to think, and the presence of what Keim regards as Johannine thought can scarcely have been derived directly from the Gospel. The thoughts may have been conveyed, as they were probably to Paul, by the teaching of John himself, which, by the study of the Epistles of Paul, can be shown to have been widely diffused in the first century. Thoma finds almost every idea of the Fourth Gospel already embodied in the Pauline Epistles (see 'Barnabas,' cc. 5. 7. 11. 12).

(3) THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS.<sup>1</sup> This curious document belongs to the middle of the second century, between A.D. 140 and 150. The earliest date is thought by Charteris to be A.D. 138, as we find that Christians are being *judicially* condemned to the wild beasts. This cannot have been the case before the reign of Hadrian. There are few, if any, references to the New Testament. Clemens Alex. and Origen frequently quote it, without regarding it as canonical. The 'Muratorian Fragment' says, "The Pastor was written *nuperrime* in Rome, by Hermas, while Bishop Pius, his brother, was in the chair of the Church of the city of Rome." There are many who believe that they trace the presence of the Johannine idea of the pre-existence of the Son of God, the identification of the GATE with the *Son of God*, and that those who are to be saved must enter by it into the kingdom ('Simil.' ix. 12). Sanday regards this as a very

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, 'Novum Testamentum extra Canonem;' Donaldson, "Apostolic Fathers" in 'History of Christian Literature and Doctrine;' Keim, 'Geschichte Jesu von Nazara,' i. 143.

problematical reference, though not impossible (p. 274; see also Westcott on the Canon, p. 211; and 'Introduction to the Gospel,' xxxii.). Davidson does not admit any resemblance.

(4) *The so-called SECOND EPISTLE OF CLEMENT.* The recent discovery of Bryennios (see Bishop Lightfoot's edition, 'Apostolic Fathers,' vol. i.) proves this document to be the "ancient homily of an unknown author," about the year A.D. 140 at the latest, but it betrays no positive acquaintance with the writings of either Paul or John, yet there are interesting traces of the Gospel. That in c. xvii. is very precarious, and turns simply on *ὁ ἦς*, "Thou wast he;" but reminds Lightfoot of John viii. 24 and xiii. 19. But in c. ix. there is a stronger reference, "If Christ the Lord who saved us, being first spirit, then became flesh (*ἐγενέτο σὰρξ*), and so called us; in like manner in this flesh we shall receive our reward; let us therefore love one another." This reminds us of John i. 14 and of the spirit of the valedictory discourse (see also c. iii.). "We through him have known the Father of truth" (cf. John i. 18; xiv. 9).

(5) *THE EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS.* Of course, the vast question of the authenticity of the Ignatian Epistles cannot here be examined further than to say that, after the publication of the Syriac translation (edited by Cureton), criticism for a while settled into the conviction that the three epistles—to the Romans, to Polycarp, and Ephesians, of which we possess in Syriac apparently the shortest version—are the sole portions which represent the authentic correspondence of the martyred Father on his way from Antioch to Rome; that the Vossian shorter Greek form of the seven epistles are, like the still longer form of the thirteen epistles which long went under the same name, spurious additions to the original text. Many of the Tübingen critics, however, rejected even the Curetonian Syriac, as well as both the shorter and longer forms of the Greek epistles. But since Zahn's work, 'Ignatius von Antiochien,' Lightfoot's article on "The Ignatian Letters," *Contemporary Review* (1877), and the exhaustive treatment of the authenticity of the middle form of the epistles, by Bishop Lightfoot, 'Apostolic Fathers,' vol. ii., it is becoming more clear to candid minds that the Syriac translation is nothing but an extract from the seven epistles for purposes of edification, that a complete Syrian text existed in the fourth century, and that it had been translated into the Armenian language from the Syriac in the sixth century. Petermann published (1849) this Armenian version, corresponding with the three Curetonian, but containing all seven Vossian, and even the six spurious ones as well. It would be wrong to place absolute dependence upon these seven, or even the *three* in their shortest form, because it is more than probable that even they have been manipulated in the direction of an ecclesiastical system, certainly profoundly dissimilar from that in Clement of Rome, or the pastoral Epistles of St. Paul. Dr. Lightfoot shows that the Martyr recognizes and enforces the distinction between presbyter and bishop in Asia minor, but reveals the fact that, both in the Philippian and the Roman Church, the distinction on which he elsewhere insists so much had not established itself. Still, they are immensely valuable in every way, if they represent the thought of a writer who cannot have been martyred later than A.D. 116 in Trajan's time, and must have been contemporary with the aged apostle himself.

There are many references and quotations of the kind that, though loosely made in those days, reveal the antecedent existence of the Gospel. I choose the more remarkable—that to 'Magnesians,' c. 8. 2: "There is one God, who manifested himself through *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*, his Son, who is his *Λόγος*, proceeding from *Σιγή*"—a term showing how Gnosticism had already made its appearance—"who in all respects was well pleasing to him that sent him" (ch. viii. 29). Volumes have been written on this one word *Σιγή* occurring in the Ignatian Letters. The old and common text is, "One, God who has manifested himself by Jesus Christ, his Son, who is his [eternal] Word, [not] proceeding from [*Σιγή*] silence, and who in all things pleased him who sent him." This has the appearance of a reply to the Valentinian speculation with reference to "silence" as the source of the Logos, and hence has been regarded as proof of the late origin of the whole epistle. It has been definitely proved that the mysterious term is much older than Valentinus, and was much used in the first century. Bishop Lightfoot has endeavoured to establish a different form of the *text*, as given above, and appears to solve the difficulty by showing that the veritable Ignatius had a certain leaning to some of the pre-Valentinian speculations, which were sufficiently rife. On either

hypothesis of text, the reference to the Fourth Gospel is very marked, and could not, as the author of 'Supernatural Religion' urges, have been derived from the theosophy of Philo.

In the 'Epistle to the Romans,' c. vii. 2 (in both Curetonian and Vossian texts), 'The living water (ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν), speaking within me,<sup>1</sup> says within me, 'Come to the Father.' I desire the Bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ . . . and I desire the Drink of God, his blood, which is incorruptible love." The ordinary Greek reads, "incorruptible love and eternal life (ἀένναος ζωή)," instead of ζῶν αἰώνιος, the common phrase in John. Lightfoot omits the last clause. Still, the resemblance to ch. vi. 55, and 32, 33, 58, and to ch. iv. 14, are conspicuous. The letter to 'Philadelphians,' c. vii. 1: "If any should wish me to go astray, . . . but the Spirit does not go astray, being from God, for he knows whence he cometh and whither he goeth, and searches out (condemns, ἐλέγχει) secret things." The unusual use of ἔρχεται and ὁπάγει, found in ch. iii. 8, is found twelve times in the Gospel and once in the Epistle, and thus has become a commonplace in the mind of the writer, who is far less original in the employment of it than was the evangelist. Ignatius's use of it is a deduction from the words of Christ: "We know not the way of the Spirit, but the Spirit himself knows his own movements."

Hilgenfeld, who places the composition of these letters in A.D. 166, says, "The whole theology of the letters of Ignatius rests on the Gospel." If the seven epistles are the genuine work of Ignatius himself, then we have proof of the existence of the Gospel from the year A.D. 110, if not earlier.

(6) *The Letter to DIOGNETUS.* Much dependence cannot be placed on the references contained in this beautiful fragment, simply for the reason that we know nothing for certain as to its date. At one time it was supposed to be from Justin's pen, and was published with his works. The manuscript which contained it was burnt in the siege of Strasburg, 1869. It is just possible that Stephens wrote it, and this theory has been maintained by some. Reuss places it at A.D. 135; Nitzsch, between A.D. 110 and 125; Westcott gives A.D. 117 as its date; Ewald places it between A.D. 120 and 130; Bunsen, in his 'Hippolytus and his Age,' A.D. 135; Davidson and Hilgenfeld, a much later date, between A.D. 160 and 180.

Granting it to have been an early document, which cannot be disproved, then the testimonies of acquaintance with the Gospel are unequivocal. "Christians dwell in the world, though they are not of the world"—the remarkable phrase, οὐκ εἰσὶν δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, c. vi. (cf. John xvii. 14); "For God loved the men for whom he made the world, to whom he has subjected all things in the world . . . to whom he sent his only begotten Son, to whom he promised the kingdom in heaven, and will give to those that loved him," c. x. (cf. c. vii. and c. xi., for further reminiscences, as well as remarkable resemblance to 1 John iv. 19 in c. x.).

(7) *The Διδαχὴ τῶν Δωδέκα Ἀποστόλων.* The early period when this remarkable document was probably written precludes any reference to the Fourth Gospel; yet we breathe throughout the references to the Eucharist, the spirit of the Gospel. God is addressed as "Holy Father" (cf. ch. xvii. 11); the "Holy Vine of David" may point to ch. xv. 1. The reference to the "Holy Name" which is said to "tabernacle" in the faithful, whereby "immortality is made known;" "eternal life," connected with the spiritual food and drink imparted, and with the knowledge of God; remind us of ch. vi. and xvii. 3. Much of the spirit of the injunction had its origin in a community perfectly familiar with Johannine teaching such as we have it in the Gospel (see *British Quarterly Review*, clxii. pp. 367, 368).

#### V. FURTHER TESTIMONIES FROM OUTSIDE THE CHURCH AND FROM APOCRYPHAL AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHIC LITERATURE.

In some respects these testimonies are of even greater weight than those which proceed from Christian writers, because they show that the documents had acquired in

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot is disposed to believe that the right reading is preserved in the interpolator's text, ἀλλόμενον for καὶ λαοῦν. If this be the case, we have undoubted reference to ch. iv. 14. From this passage and the preceding passage (vers. 10, 11) the expression, ὕδωρ ζῶν ἀλλόμενον, took prominent place in the discussions of the second century, of which ample proof is given.

the Christian Church a character of considerable importance when thus used and quoted as authorities for ideas which the writers did not hold.

We will commence with those which establish this far-reaching influence in the close of the second century, and then move backwards.

1. CELSUS. We are brought into contact with this writer by means of Origen's reply to his assault on Christianity. This was designated *Λόγος Ἀληθής*. Keim has proved (1873), in his restoration of the work of Celsus from the great treatise of Origen, that it was written about A.D. 178. Keim has made it probable that the friend of Lucian, supposed by Origen to be an Epicurean, and with whom Origen identified him, may have been the man, and that his Epicureanism is of very doubtful character. Volkmar and the author of 'Supernatural Religion' try to establish a later date than this; but the great bulk of critics think the date is earlier rather than later than that fixed upon by Keim. It is unquestionable that Celsus, whoever he was, was intimately acquainted with the *four* Gospels, and recognized them as common authorities for the doctrines of the faith which he despised.<sup>1</sup>

Origen, 'Contra Celsum,' i. 50, shows that Celsus accuses the Christians of believing that "the Son of God is come down from heaven" (cf. ch. iii. 31; viii. 23). I. 67, he quotes from Celsus: "Thou hast made no manifestation to us, although they challenged thee in the temple to exhibit some unmistakable sign that thou wert Son of God" (cf. ch. ii. 18; x. 24; Matt. xxi. 23). I. 70 implies that Celsus objected to Christ, that the body of a God could not be thirsting at the well of Jacob, or eating broiled fish and honeycomb (cf. ch. iv. and xxi.). II. 31, he refers to the charge that Christians were guilty of sophisticating reasoning in saying that "the Son of God is the Logos himself," and "when we declare that the Logos is Son of God, we present not pure and holy Logos, but a degraded man punished by scourging and crucifixion." II. 36, Celsus referred to the *ichor* flowing in the veins of the Crucified (cf. ch. xix. 34, 35). II. 49, the apparent quotation of *φῶς καὶ ἀλήθεια* from the Fourth Gospel. Now, that a heathen opponent should have made use of these citations from the Fourth Gospel in A.D. 178 shows how widely it must have been diffused before his day.

2. TESTAMENT OF THE XII. PATRIARCHS. Written by a Jewish Christian, who puts into the mouth of the sons of Jacob the pious advice which these patriarchs might with most singularly gifted prevision have given to the Christians who were nevertheless proud of their ancestral faith and race. Tertullian and Origen refer to this work. (Sinkler has edited the document with many discussions, 'Anti-Nicene Library'; cf. Hilgenfeld, 'Nov. Test., Extra Canonem.') The work, in Godef's judgment, was written before the second destruction of Jerusalem, therefore before A.D. 130. In this document the Messiah is spoken of as "Light of the world," "Saviour," "Son of God," "Only Son," "Lamb of God," "God come in the flesh," "The Spirit gives witness to the truth;" all of which phrases reveal Johannine thought.

3. THE CLEMENTINE HOMILIES. The work of Dr. Sanday, frequently referred to, gives a most exhaustive treatment of the bearing of the text of the Clementine homilies of the pseudo-Clement, on the previous existence of the four Gospels. Seeing that we have only a Latin translation of the 'Recognitions,' no dependence can be placed upon *their* testimony; but if the 'Homilies' were the original work, which was expanded into the form of the 'Recognitions,' and which is the opinion of Ewald, Reuss, Lücke, and many others, we are in possession of a document of the middle of the second century, written by a Judeo-Christian, who reveals acquaintance with the four Gospels. "There are no material differences from our Gospels" in these quotations. Some are exact, some are variant, some are merely allusive, some are combinations from all three. They contain passages, moreover, which are peculiar to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and some proving acquaintance with our canonical Gospel.

For a long time it was said that the Clementines contained no reference to the Gospel of John. This Hilgenfeld maintained to 1850; but ch. x. 3, 9, and 27, are unmistakably referred to in 'Hom. Clem.,' iii. 52: "On this account the true Prophet said, 'I am the Gate of life; he that entereth by me, entereth εἰσέρχεται into life;' and again, 'My sheep hear my voice.'" 'Hom.,' xi. 26: "Thus hath the Prophet sworn to us, saying, 'Except ye be born again of or in living water, into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

<sup>1</sup> See Froude, in *Fraser's Magazine*, February, 1878.

But Dressel, in 1853, having discovered the manuscript of 'Hom.,' xix., not previously known to exist, published it. In this is contained the remarkable quotation (xix. 22): "It is for this reason also that our Lord replied to those who questioned him concerning the man blind *ἠγροῦ* from his birth, who received his sight, and who asked him whether this man sinned, or his parents, that he was born blind (*τυφλός*), answered, Neither did this man sin nor his parents, but that by him the power of God should be made manifest, curing the sins of ignorance." Hilgenfeld yielded to this evidence. Those who hold out against it are compelled to admit that (save from this quotation) there is nothing to bring the homilies later than A.D. 160.

The opponents of the Fourth Gospel are urgent in drawing attention to the strongly expressed divergence between the Clementine homilies and the Gospel. If this be so, these Ebionites from whom the homilies proceeded would never have quoted from a work of an opposite school, if it were of modern origin, or if there had been any colourable reason for repudiating its apostolicity. This quotation, therefore, together with Justin's, Tatian's, and the other evidence adduced, renders the date assigned by Baur for the composition of the Fourth Gospel, viz. A.D. 160—170, entirely incredible.

4. *MONTANUS and Montanism.* Montanus, the leader of this sect, made his appearance in Phrygia about A.D. 140, and he based his theory on the prophecy of a *Paraclete*, and on the promised gift of the Holy Spirit as a perpetual and supernatural presence and prophetic energy in the Church. No intelligible explanation can be put upon the adoption of the terms, *Logos, Paracletos, Numphios*, which (Theodoret says) Montanus claimed for himself, but his own misuse of an acknowledged source of authoritative tradition and doctrine. Montanism, as a reaction into disciplinary forms and millennarian views, was not called forth by this Gospel, which nowhere sustains it; but, as Keim says, "Montanism derived its ideas from the surrounding Church, which was or might be under the influence of the Fourth Gospel." Then coupling this fact with the undoubted quotations and allusions, it brings the composition back to at least before A.D. 120—140, during which time it must have been well known in the Church.

5. *MARCION.* Marcion, as we have stated in earlier remarks, has now been definitively proved to have mutilated for his purposes the *Third Gospel*, and to have endeavoured to establish his doctrine of Christian dualism by representing the demiurge as hostile to the supreme God, and the Lord Jesus to have had no part in him or his work, as one essentially hostile to "matter," and to Jews who were the very work and agents of the demiurge. How could he have found, even with abundant mutilation, anything to satisfy him in the Fourth Gospel, where the humanity of Jesus, his body and its characteristics, are so abundantly insisted upon?

It is very perplexing that scholars like Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, and Davidson should think that John's Gospel would have been more suitable than Luke's if it had been in existence. The doctrine of the Incarnation, of the weariness of Christ, of the flesh of Christ, his proof of the sameness of the body that had risen with that which had been crucified, the marriage-feast, etc.,—all have led great critics like Bleek, Weiszäcker, Luthardt, Godet, and others, to take a very different view.

That Marcion was acquainted with the Fourth Gospel, and rejected it, is distinctly said and argued upon by Tertullian ('Adv. Marcion,' iv. 3), who recites Marcion's use of Gal. ii. to justify his rejection of the authority of the apostles, and to justify his repudiation "of the Gospels published in the name of apostles, and also of apostolical men." "James, Cephas, and John" are the apostles or apostolical men whom Marcion knew to be authors of Gospels. In the 'De Carne Christi,' c. iii., Tertullian says, when simply arguing against the Gnosticism of Marcion, "If thou hadst not rejected the writings opposed to thy system, the Gospel of John would be there to convince thee." The inference that Marcion, who reached Rome A.D. 140, knew and rejected John's Gospel, strongly confirms its wide diffusion in the period already referred to, viz. A.D. 120—140.

6. *VALENTINUS and the Valentinians.* The philosophy of Valentinus, the most interesting and poetic of all the Gnostic systems, cannot here be expounded. Much light has been thrown upon it by Irenæus, who was positively induced to write the great work against heresies by his knowledge of this system, and of the two parties into which his disciples, Ptolemæus and Heracleon, drifted. Moreover, Hippolytus, in

the 'Refutation of all Heresies,' now generally attributed to him, has given much additional information.

It is admitted that our knowledge of Valentinus and of his disciples comes to us second hand, but we find a decisive proof that Irenæus wrote his work against heresies not later than A.D. 182, perhaps earlier, and this by a number of coincident references.<sup>1</sup> Irenæus describes the writing and system of Valentinus and his two followers, Ptolemæus and Heracleon, who are generally mentioned together. Now, Irenæus says "that the Valentinians ('Adv. Hær.,' iii. 11. 7) avail themselves in the most complete manner of the Gospel according to John to demonstrate their syzygies (pair of æons)." Irenæus also asserts that they made use of the Scriptures, twisting them to their own purpose (iii. 12. 12). In numerous passages they are shown to have quoted the synoptists, and (i. 8. 5) he quotes at length numerous passages from ch. i. 1—18, which were tortured to sustain their peculiar system of emanation, with other references to their similar use of Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians.

Moreover, Tertullian (whose evidence Davidson puts on one side, because, says he, "that father knew very little about Valentinus") says that Valentinus made use of "the whole instrument"—the entire collection of sacred books ('De Præs. Hæret.,' c. 38).

We have already seen above that Irenæus does mention Ptolemæus and Heracleon by name, as two of these disciples of Valentinus, and there can be no reasonable doubt that, in his extant writings, the former quotes the synoptic Gospels fully and repeatedly. Epiphanius has preserved an epistle of Ptolemæus to Flora (Epiphanius, 'Hær.,' xxxiii.), in which Matt. xii. 25; xix. 6, 8; xv. 5—8; v. 17, 38, 39, are undoubtedly imbedded, revealing intimate acquaintance with peculiar characteristic phraseology of the First Gospel. Moreover, in the same letter occurs an unmistakable quotation from ch. i. 3. Clemens of Alex. ('Strom.,' iv. 9) declares that Heracleon was personally known to Valentinus himself (*γνωστός*), which would throw his date back to at least A.D. 160; for Valentinus came to Rome to proclaim his peculiar philosophy about A.D. 140, and he died in Cyprus, A.D. 160; i.e. Eusebius says, Valentinus came to Rome in the time of Hyginus, between A.D. 136 and 140. Now, this fellow-disciple with Ptolemæus, viz. Heracleon, actually wrote a commentary upon John's Gospel, from which Origen makes large quotations. So that we are thrown back to the date of A.D. 160—170, and possibly earlier, when a heretic treats the Fourth Gospel with so much respect as to regard it as of high Christian authority. Notwithstanding this evidence, Dr. Davidson does not allow that Valentinus himself made use of the Gospel, and suggests that it may have been produced a little before Heracleon's time, and that he found it useful for his specific purpose. Here, however, as if to refute the speculation, we find, in the 'Refutation of all Heresies,' by Hippolytus (vi. 35 [30, Eng. trans.]), "All the prophets, therefore, and the Law spoke by means of (*ἀπέ*) the demiurge, a foolish god, he says (referring to Valentinus himself). On this account (*φησί*), he says, saith the Saviour, 'All that came before me were thieves and robbers.'" A similar method is adopted by Hippolytus (viii. 10) in quoting, on the authority of Valentinus, John iii. 5, 6. So also (ix. 12), ch. xiv. 11; and the phrase, *ὁ ἀρχὼν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου* in vi. 52.

There is, perhaps, a little vagueness as to whether Hippolytus, in the sixth book, is referring to Valentinus or to his followers; but when Valentinus's whole system bristles with references to *Λόγος*, *Πατήρ*, *Φῶς*, *Ζωή*, *Ἀληθεία*, *Μονογένης*, *Παρακλήτος*, as elements in his philosophic system, we are convinced of one or two things—either that the Fourth Gospel was based on Valentinus, or that the latter made use of this Scripture, as of the rest, in defence of his system. Putting the simple, natural, biblical use of these terms in John's prologue and elsewhere against the artificial cumbrous use of them in Valentinus, with all the other evidence of the high value put upon the Gospel at this time, it becomes as nearly certain as is possible in such regions that Valentinus himself was familiar with the Fourth Gospel. This, then, throws the existence of the Gospel back to the very beginning of the second century. In this conclusion both Bleck and Keim, as well as Bunsen, agree.

<sup>1</sup> The death of Eleutherus, in A.D. 190, after the appearance of Theodotion's translation of the Old Testament, which we are told by Epiphanius came out in the reign of Commodus (A.D. 180—190), and which is dated in the 'Paschal Chron.' A.D. 184, during the consulate of Marcellus and Ulpian, is one of the data.

Hilgenfeld ('Das Evangelium und die Briefe Johannis nach ihrem Lehrbegriff dargestellt:' 1849) seeks by a most elaborate process to trace the subject-matter of the prologue and the Logos-idea, that of God and redemption, to the Gnostic speculations, especially those of Valentinus. Thoma (*loc. cit.*, p. 822) admits that the use of the Gospel by Valentinus is neither chronologically nor dogmatically impossible, though it is indemonstrable.

7. **BASILIDES and the Basilideans.** We now approach another name of still more importance; for if Basilides can be shown to have quoted or used the Gospel, it is morally certain it was not produced after the time of Valentinus. For, according to the statements of Jerome ('De Viris Ill.' c. xxi.), he must have died after A.D. 132. Eusebius places his activity under Hadrian (A.D. 117—138). Hippolytus ('Ref. Hær.,' vii. 8, Eng. trans.): "Basilides and Isidorus, the true sons and disciples of Basilides, say that Matthias communicated to them secret discourses, which, being specially instructed, he heard from the Saviour." Whether the two heresiarchs lied or not about Matthias, they could hardly have laid such a claim if their date of birth and age had rendered this incredible or impossible. Epiphanius ('Hær.,' xxiii. 1—7; xxiv. 1) tells us that Basilides was teaching in Antioch before he went to Alexandria, and at Alexandria he was the predecessor of Valentinus.

Now, if Basilides made use of the Fourth Gospel, we are thrown back to the very first years of the second century as the latest period when it could have been written.

The question of questions is whether Hippolytus, in discussing his philosophy and quoting his quotations, had the great work of Basilides before him, and referred to Basilides himself or to some later Basilidean. If we take his general method into account, that he contrasts the *system* of Basileides with the *school* of Valentinus, and that when he refers to a school he uses the term *φασίν*, or *κατ' αὐτούς*, or *λέγουσι*, and when he refers to a *man* or to a *book* he uses the singular *φῆσι*, we can hardly entertain a reasonable doubt that Hippolytus was quoting (*totidem verbis*) the method in which Basilides defended his views. Let the whole (bk. vii. 22 [8, Eng. trans.]) passage be read in which Hippolytus represents Basilides quoting from the Gospels: "He was the true Light that lighteth every man coming into the world." High authorities and great critics concur in the belief, if not the moral certainty, that this is the case (see Sanday, *lib. cit.*, pp. 298, etc.). See also ch. ii. 4 of the Gospel in bk. vii. 27 (15, Eng. trans.); Matthew Arnold, 'God and the Bible,' p. 268, concludes that Basilides had before him (A.D. 125) the Fourth Gospel; Mangold's edition of 'Bleek's Einleitung,' 265. It is true that, in the midst of the passage, Hippolytus does use the term *λέγουσι οὗτοι*, although in the former part of it he does make special reference by name to Basilides himself; and, as if going back to him, after a momentary digression. Thus he suggests the fact that he had the work of Basilides open before him (art. on "Basilides" in Smith's 'Dictionary of Christian Biography').

8. **OPHITES, or Naaseni.** Baur admits that the sect calling themselves by this name were amongst the earliest of the Gnostics ('Das Chr. und die Chr. Kirche der ersten Jahrh.,' p. 192). Irenæus (i. 29. 1 and 31. 3) speaks of them as predecessors of the school of Valentinus, its "fathers and mothers;" and Hippolytus (vi. 6) even names 'Simon Magus' among their offshoots. They were subdivided, according to him, into several groups—Peratai, Cainites, Sethians, Justinians. They all, in their violent hostility to the God of the Old Testament, revered the serpent; hence their title, either from the Hebrew *נָחַשׁ*, *nachash*, a serpent, or from the Greek *ὄφης*. The serpent was regarded by them as the author of intelligence and of emancipation to enslaved man. Consequently, "the seed of the serpent" from Cain to Judas received homage from them. Intense dualists, charging evil of all kinds upon man's corporeal frame, they sought in "intelligence" (*γνώσις*) deliverance from evil. Now, the New Testament affords strong evidence of the existence of these sectaries and Gnostic speculations in the first century. If we can accept the authenticity of the pastoral Epistles, there is abundant proof of such a tendency, against which those Epistles are a warning. So strong is the protest contained in them against "endless genealogies," against the evil inherent in things created by God, against a "*γνώσις* falsely so called," that many have endeavoured to drag the pastoral Epistles down to the time of Marcion, in order to account for these references. Other Epistles of St. Paul, also contested on the same ground, such as the Epistle to the Colossians, are equally explicit (ii. 18) (see Light-



foot's 'Comm. on Coloss.'). The first reply to such a proceeding is simply this—that the germs of Gnostic evil lay in the religious speculations of the first century, and were derived from Oriental sources. Moreover, satisfactory external evidence for these pastoral Epistles, at much earlier date than A.D. 150, is forthcoming. They are proof of the coexistence of the perilous dualism in the first century. The genuineness of the Ignatian letters would establish beyond contradiction the much earlier date of the pastoral Epistles.

But further, unmistakable proof is found in the Apocalypse (ii. 24) of the use of Gnostic phraseology by the teachers in Thyatira. Their knowledge of "the depths of Satan," and of other mysteries of evil, is sternly repudiated by the Lord; and St. Paul is believed by Godet to have encountered the same hostile spirit in Corinth. When Paul hints that some "*in the Spirit*" actually dared to "call Jesus accursed," he is in all probability referring to those who separated "the Christ" from Jesus, believing that the former was an emanation from God who came down to earth, and that the human life of Jesus was united to him by the loosest vinctulum; that the Christ could neither be incarnate, suffer, nor die, nor be raised again. The existence of such a party, who called themselves the "Christ" party, who repudiated *Jesus* Christ, who denied the resurrection of *Christ*, though they might have allowed the death or resuscitation of *Jesus*, does much to explain the allusions in the two undoubted Epistles to Corinthians (see 2 Cor. xi. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xii. 3). This hypothesis is confirmed by the statement of Epiphanius that 1 Corinthians was written against the error of Cerinthus. Now, it becomes almost certain, from the statement of Polycarp (recorded by Irenæus, iii. 3. 4), that in the later years of John and Cerinthus, these two men came into contact at Ephesus; consequently, the errors of Cerinthus, who held views akin to the Ophites, may have infected the Church at Corinth. Therefore the concurring testimony of Paul's Epistles, of the Apocalypse, of Irenæus, and of Epiphanius, shows the existence of the evil towards the end of the first century, even so early as A.D. 56—68. And such a view aids the reception of the pastoral Epistles as well as the Corinthian Epistles. But great additional light is thrown upon the subject by the writings of Hippolytus ('Ref. Hær.,' bk. v.). He described at great length the views of these Ophites or their subordinate sects, and regarded them as the earliest of the Gnostics, and he also reports the uses they made of testimonies from the four Gospels. The quotations made by them from the Fourth Gospel (so far as this question of date is concerned) are of very explicit character. Thus ch. iii. 6; i. 3, 4; ii. 1—11; with strong references to ch. vi. 53. Ch. viii. 21; xiii. 33; x. 9; iv. 21; ix. 1, were cited by them. Hippolytus, moreover, gives extracts from the books of the Perates, in which John's Gospel is frequently quoted. We cannot say positively when the books were written, but we have seen reasons for believing that there is much in the New Testament to justify belief that the statements of Hippolytus and Irenæus are correct when they assign to them great antiquity. It is highly probable that they were among the earliest to try and twist to their own purpose the sacred words of the Fourth Gospel.

9. *Conclusion.* Our conclusion is that the Fourth Gospel is quoted by heretics and Christian philosophers, by apostolic Fathers and early apologists, by pseudo-epigraphic writers and historians, by the harmonist and commentator, in one stream from the close of the first century to the close of the second, when we find it classed without any hesitation by Irenæus, Athenagoras, and Theophylact as John's Gospel. It is used by the Clementine homilists, the most extreme form of Jewish Christianity; and by Gnostics, who went so far in their antagonism to Judaism as to call themselves by the most opprobrious names in Jewish history. The apologies and dialogue of Justin reveal its presence, as the original of a vast amount of independent speculation. The external evidence, therefore, is as strong as for that of the synoptists—a fact which Keim admits. It is immeasurably greater than for half of the well-known classical compositions. So far as its existence is concerned, there can be no manner of question, nor for its wide diffusion, nor for the general respect in which it must have been held. There is not the smallest trace of the friction or excitement which its production in the middle of the second century would have produced.

We conclude this part of the subject with the external testimony of its closing verses, which correspond with the narrative preserved in the Muratorian Canon. No manuscripts have been found without these verses, and, as they use the present tense,

μαρτυρῶν, in contradistinction with the γράφας, a very strong evidence is supplied that they are the appendix of the Ephesian presbyters before the death of the venerable writer, affirming their authorship and their authenticity. Moreover, as Luthardt observes, the heading in all the manuscripts, Κατὰ Ἰωάννην, rests upon the tradition that accompanied the document from the first.

## VI. THE CANONICITY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

By this we mean the proof that it takes its place, with the other Gospels and the most authentic Epistles, in the oldest collections of sacred books, in the earliest versions of them into other languages, and the most celebrated and earliest-known manuscripts of the New Testament, and sacred lists of the earliest councils which treated of the question. The whole of this evidence is not forthcoming for the Apocalypse, nor for all the general Epistles. The Fourth Gospel, however, is contained (1) in the *Peshito Syriac* of the second century, which is destitute of the Apocalypse, of the Epistles of Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John; (2) in the *Old Latin*, which translation, though prepared in the second century, does not contain the Epistle to the Hebrews, nor 2 Peter, nor (?) James; (3) in the Muratorian Canon; (4) in the Canon of Origen (A.D. 184—253); (5) in the Canon of Eusebius, who regarded the Epistles of James, of Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, as disputed, and the Apocalypse as spurious; (6) in Codex Vaticanus (B) and Codex Sinaiticus (N) of the fourth century; (7) in the Canon of Athanasius; and (8) in the Canon of the Councils of Laodicea (A.D. 364), the Third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397), and the Canons of Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom.

These facts do not, *per se*, establish authenticity or greater positive antiquity for the document than their own dates; yet they reveal an amount of widespread belief and reverence on the part of learned and by no means credulous writers, by bodies of men, by Churches diffused over Asia, Europe, and Africa, from Mesopotamia to Gaul, from Alexandria and Antioch to Smyrna and Rome. It is difficult to conceive such a combination of facts as compatible with the late origin of the document, by some utterly unknown and untrustworthy pseudepigrapher. Other questions, sometimes associated with the external evidence, seem to me better discussed when we have made further inquiries into the phenomena of the authorship.

Having, then, made it highly probable, if not a demonstrable fact, that this Fourth Gospel was known, quoted, and accepted as an authority for the facts and teachings of the new faith, and having shown that it is difficult, if not impossible, to put its origination later than the commencement of the second century, we proceed to investigate—

## VII. THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF ITS AUTHORSHIP.

1. *The author must have been a Jew.* Great effort is made by many writers to prove that, whoever wrote it, he could not have been a Jew, but must have been some Christian Gentile of marked hostility to the Jews and their race, and that the author displays an ignorance or indifference to the sacred people incompatible, of course, with his being the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee. This impression is created by calling attention to a few peculiarities of the Gospel, which seem to point in that direction, but which are abundantly counterbalanced by other most important characteristics of the document.

In proof of the position, (1) Dr. Davidson (ii. 427) calls attention to the contrast between the Old Testament doctrine of the creation of all things out of nothing, and the statement of the Fourth Gospel that all things were formed by the Word from pre-existent materials. How that can be possibly reconciled with ch. i. 3 it is difficult to see. Other statements follow, comparing the richer, riper, teaching of the Fourth Gospel with the Old Testament doctrine of Hades, of judgment. It is argued that no Jew could have spoken of eternal life on this side the grave, and that the revolution of thought thus indicated carries the authorship beyond the limits of Judaism. In reply, we call attention to the distinct references to "judgment" and "the resurrection of the dead" in ch. v. 29, as well as to the teaching of the Apostle Paul touching the essential nature of eternal life. Moreover, the argument of our opponents here precludes the possibility that the horizon of this Jew should have been enlarged by his contact with, to say the least, the greatest Teacher that the world had ever known. Was not St. Paul a Jew, "a Hebrew of Hebrews"?

(2) The author of the Fourth Gospel is charged with ignorance of topographical facts which a Jew would never have displayed. The ignorance of enlightened Englishmen, in the days of school boards and large maps and Ordnance surveys, about geographical facts is no proof that they are not Englishmen; and ten thousand similar illustrations might be given of far more weight from well-known writers. But what are these signs of ignorance? "Bethany beyond Jordan" (ch. i. 28): The modern and approved revision of the text. This was a place of which Origen was ignorant in his day, a fact which probably explains the alteration into *Bethabara*, "the house of the ford," in lieu of *Bethany*, "the house of the boat." Different etymologies are given of the word "Bethany," as "house of dates," etc., which may have suited the well-known Bethany (see notes on ch. i. 28). It is clear that the author was not confounding it with Bethany near Jerusalem, by the very phrase, "*Bethany beyond Jordan*," and by his close and exact statement as to the distance of the well-known Bethany from Jerusalem (ch. xi. 18). We find in the gospel narrative two Antiochs, two Bethsaidas, two Cæsareas; why should there not have been two little villages called Bethany? Ch. ix. 7, "Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent," is another reference which is supposed to prove the author's ignorance. The latest investigations show that, even to the present day, can be traced the link of connection between the waters of Siloam and the Fountain of the Virgin. That the evangelist should have seen some typical meaning in the very name is essentially Jewish. Now, against these supposed flaws may be set his accurate statements about "the pool of Bethesda and the five porches" (ch. v. 2). Again, the Ephraim near the wilderness (ch. xi. 54) is identified with Ophrah (1 Sam. xiii. 17); the "Ænon near to Salim," of ch. iii. 23 is identified by the modern explorers. "The brook Kedron" (ch. xviii. 1). The Prætorium is accurately referred to in ch. xviii. 28; the "Gabbatha" of ch. xix. 13 is given in the Aramaic form, as of one acquainted with the place before the fall of the city. Besides this, the Sychar of John iv. 5, which cannot be identified with Shechem, though it was once thought to be a mere corruption of the name. It turns out that this "Sychar" has been identified conclusively with a village still standing under the name of 'Askar, which reveals traces of great antiquity ('Report of the Palest. Expl. Fund,' 1877, p. 149; and 1876, p. 197). Add to this a number of minute topographical touches, more abundant than in most books of the New Testament: "Solomon's porch" (ch. x. 23); "the treasury in the temple" (ch. viii. 20); the scenery of the sea of Galilee, of Tiberias; and, as Westcott admirably indicates, the decoration of the temple by the great golden vine which adorned its exterior (see note, ch. xiv. 31; xv. 1—7).

(3) The apparent antipathy of the writer to "the Jews," who are said always to be spoken of as hostile, and as people from whom the writer regarded himself as separated; e.g. "The purifying of the Jews" (ch. ii. 6); "The Jews' Passover" (ch. ii. 13); "A feast of the Jews" (ch. v. 1; vi. 4); "The manner of the Jews is to bury" (ch. xix. 40). But these expressions are nothing more than what a narrator, writing for Gentiles, would be sure to adopt, when giving them information, and there is no opprobrium involved in any of them. The words were written down many years after the events occurred, and when the Jewish people were scattered, and had proclaimed themselves bitterly hostile to the faith. There are, however, other passages where "the Jews" are referred to as distinct from the *ὁ ὄχλος* of Galileans, and in opposition to the Lord. This is a terrible fact in their history; but other and countervailing statements should be pondered. The writer studiously calls attention to the division of opinion among these Jews, and to certain remarkable exceptions, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea (ch. iii. 1; vii. 50). He speaks of the Jews as Christ's own people, as *οἱ ἱδίοι*, "who received him not" except in part. There was always "a division among them." As a nation, they rejected their Lord; as individuals, they received him (ch. ii. 23, πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν; iii. 2, οἶδαμεν, etc.; iii. 26, πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτόν; iv. 1, Jesus made more disciples in Judæa than John did; iv. 22, "ἡ σωτηρία is from the Jews." The true interpretation of ch. iv. 43—45 is that Jesus considered the land of Judæa to be *par excellence* "his own country."

The whole narrative in John v. shows a bitter enmity to Jesus when he assumed an independence of Pharisaic interpretation of the sabbatic law; but the narrative is interpenetrated throughout with Jewish ideas of the sabbath, of the Scriptures, and of Moses. In ch. vii. the next visit to Jerusalem is characterized by the resuscitation of their malice, and reveals "the fear of the Jews;" but it shows also the knowledge of the

minutiae of the Jewish law of circumcision (ver. 23), and the current notion concerning the διασπορά τῶν Ἑλλήνων. Moreover, the result of the solemn debate is that "many believed on him" (vers. 31, 41, 46). The seventh and eighth chapters reveal the author's intimate acquaintance with the ceremonial of the lights and the pouring of water in the Feast of Tabernacles. In ch. viii. 31 he speaks expressly of "the Jews which believed on him;" and it is not at all incompatible with their position that they should have ignored right through their history that they had been really in bondage to any man, as Abraham's seed. In ch. x. 19—21 a division among them is expressly noticed (cf. ch. x. 42; xi. 4, 48—xii. 11).

The Pharisees are the mouthpieces of the purely Jewish feeling of bigoted attachment to the Law, which they had monopolized, and which the evangelist and our Lord spoke of as "their Law," "your Law," but which Pharisees had misunderstood and perverted. The priests and Sadducees were his opponents as organs of sacerdotal power and political influence; and both these tendencies, sometimes in opposition, occasionally in unhallowed agreement, are represented with a delicacy and accuracy of treatment such as no one but a genuine Palestinian Jew could have effected. Moreover, by the term "the Jews," the writer evidently connotes the ruling party, the chief authorities in Jerusalem, as contrasted with the Galilæan multitudes.

One reference of a precisely similar usage is found in the peculiarly Jewish Gospel of Matthew (xxviii. 15), showing that this mode of speaking of "the Jews" was not confined to the Fourth Gospel (see also Luke xxiii. 51, and numerous expressions in the Pauline Epistles: 2 Cor. xi. 24; Gal. ii. 14; 1 Thess. ii. 14 and also Rev. ii. 9 and iii. 9; Gal. i. 13, 14; Titus i. 14). Numerous treatises have discussed this use of the word "the Jews" (A. Alry, 'Jésus et les Juifs dans le 4<sup>e</sup> Evang.,' Str., 1866; cf. Reuss, 'Hist. of the Sacred Scriptures,' p. 221, Eng. trans.).

Another supposed indication of the fact of the writer's ignorance of Jewish customs is that *Annas* is spoken of as ἀρχιερεὺς ("high priest"), while Caiaphas, his son-in-law, is also repeatedly called such at the same time (ch. xi. 49; xviii. 13, 19, 22, 24). It is said that the evangelist thought of Annas and Caiaphas as performing the functions alternately every year, seeing that "that same year" is an explanatory addition to the name of Caiaphas. This cannot be the solution of the supposed difficulty; because, the "same year" in which Caiaphas prophesied involuntarily the expiatory death of Christ, he represents Annas as the high priest. The fourth evangelist is not the only writer who suggests the same supposed inaccuracy. In Luke iii. 2 the two are spoken of together as high priests, and in Acts iv. 6 Annas is again spoken of as high priest. Dr. Davidson says it will not do to suppose that he retained the official title after he had been deposed, because Ishmael, Eleazar, and Simon, his relatives, who held the office between Annas and Caiaphas, would also have retained the same title. But we cannot prove that they did not. They are never referred to by the evangelist John or Luke. Moreover, a vast difference is obvious between the old man who was the legal high priest, and whose influence was great, though not officially recognized by the Roman government. Caiaphas was the man from whom alone Pilate would have received the official charge; and therefore, as John says, Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas. The synoptists narrate more at length what took place in the court of Caiaphas. Our evangelist, as being known to Annas (ch. xviii. 15, 16), was likely, as an eye-witness, to have given a more definite account, and one supplementary to the general statement of the synoptists. The expression, "that same year," is best understood of the solemnity with which John regarded the practical duties of the high priest *de facto* on the occasion when the incarnate Word was rejected by his own people. Not only the Fourth Gospel, but the other three, repeatedly use the expression, οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς, of the most distinguished priests, including the heads of the courses, the president of the Sanhedrin, etc., in days when the old official title was held in fee from the Roman power. The rigidity of the rule that there should be only *one* high priest was not observed even in the reign of *David*, when Zadok and Abiathar both held the office at the same time.

(4) Dr. Davidson considers that a similar argument may be drawn from the fact that in the Fourth Gospel the Galilæans are classed among "the Jews" who were hostile to Jesus, whereas he says that "in the synoptists, the Galilæans are the warm adherents and friends of Jesus of Nazareth." Surely he could not sufficiently have borne in mind

the repeated attempts upon Christ's life at Nazareth and at Capernaum; the fact that Jesus had not where to lay his head, alone mentioned by the synoptists; that Herod Antipas of Galilee sought to kill him; that the long conflict with the Pharisees took place in Galilee, and one which culminated in the endeavour to take him by force and confine him as a madman (Mark ii., iii.). True, the multitudes were deeply impressed, but their fickleness and unspirituality are quite in harmony with the language about the Galilæans attributed by the Fourth Gospel to our Lord.

This negative argument or reply to objections is independent of the fact that throughout the Gospel there are abundant traces of that thorough and intimate acquaintance with Old Testament Scriptures and Hebrew ideas, which only a Jew would be likely to possess. The entire references of the prologue are based on Old Testament ideas. His reference to "the Prophet" (ch. i. 21; iv. 25); the zeal for the sanctity of the temple (ch. ii. 13—20), involving chronological details about the period occupied in its building; his knowledge of Old Testament history, as in the reference to the image of the serpent (ch. iii. 14); the subtle ascription to Jesus by the Baptist of the title of Bridegroom of the true Israel—an idea which pervades prophetic Scripture (Jer. ii. 2; Ezek. xvi. 8; Hos. ii. 19, 20); the allusion to the various feasts, e.g. the Passovers (ch. ii., vi., xii., xviii.), the unnamed feast (ch. v.), the Feast of Tabernacles (ch. vii.), the Feast of the Dedication (ch. x. 22); the references to Moses (ch. v. 45; vii. 22), and to Abraham (ch. viii. 33, 37, 56—58); confirm the hypothesis. His declaration that "the Scriptures cannot be broken" (ch. x. 35); that what is written in the prophets and in the Law is of commanding authority; that the Scripture must be fulfilled (ch. xiii. 18; xvii. 12; xv. 25); but pre-eminently and chiefly the repeated quotations from the Old Testament, where the evangelist or our Lord shows that these quotations, as thus reported, are not dependent upon the LXX. Westcott has analyzed them carefully (see also Turpie, 'Old Testament in the New'). There are fourteen in all—seven made by the evangelist, five by Jesus, two by others; and, among these, four almost verbally agree with the accurate translation of the Hebrew by the LXX.; three agree with the Hebrew against the LXX.: ch. xix. 37 (cf. Rev. i. 7). This quotation from Zechariah, which agrees with a translation found in Theodotion and Symmachus; the quotation in ch. vi. 45 of Isa. liv. 13 and in ch. xiii. 18 of Ps. xli. 9 (xlii. 10); lastly, one celebrated passage (ch. xii. 40) differs from both the Hebrew and LXX. where they do in the main agree and are accurately quoted in Matthew and Acts; others differ from the Hebrew and LXX. where these do not agree; but there is no case where the Fourth Gospel agrees with the LXX. against the Hebrew.

2. *The author must have been a PALESTINIAN rather than an Alexandrine Jew.* The above remarks go far to prove that the author of the Fourth Gospel was a Hebrew, and a Palestinian Jew. But there is another argument, which has been made much of, in disproof of this position, and which must be examined with some detail. It has often been said that the author was an *Alexandrine Jew*, if a Jew at all, familiar with the exegetic and philosophical arguments of Philo-Judæus and his compeers, and that we owe this marvellous document to the culture and Hellenic influences of early Neoplatonism rather than to the teaching of the Old Testament and the veritable tradition of the discourse of Jesus of Nazareth. This kind of remark is taken up and endorsed by men like J. Stuart Mill.<sup>1</sup> The more or less active dependence of the evangelist upon the Alexandrine school is asserted with more or less of confidence even by Lücke, Bleek, Baur, and others. Keim ('Life of Jesus of Nazara,' Eng. trans., vol. i. pp. 152, 167) admits the great originality of the author, who adopted and modified in many ways the Philonian Logos; and Dr. Davidson says that the "Incarnation is alien to the Philonian conceptions," and that an "important link between Philonism

<sup>1</sup> 'Three Essays,' p. 254: "What could be added or interpolated (into the teaching of Jesus) by a disciple we may see in the mystical parts of the Gospel of St. John—matter imported from Philo and the Alexandrian Platonists, and put into the mouth of the Saviour, in long speeches about himself, such as the other Gospels contain not the slightest vestige of, though pretended to have been delivered on occasions of the deepest interest, when his principal followers were all present; most prominently at the Last Supper. The East was full of men who could have stolen any quantity of this poor stuff, as the multitudinous Oriental sects of Gnostics did." The passage is a melancholy instance of the utter carelessness of Mr. Mill.

and the Logos theory of the Fourth Gospel is missing"—a link which he finds in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in some of Paul's Epistles. Luthardt and Godet boldly repudiate the influence of the purely Alexandrine school upon the Fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

We must admit that there is a peculiar phraseology adopted by the author of the Fourth Gospel which demands some explanation, and which, to dis sever altogether "root and branch" from the Alexandrian school of theosophy and biblical interpretation, is unreasonable and unnecessary. Luthardt and Weiss, Höleman, De Pressensé, and many others have carried their sense of divergence between the two writers to an extreme. Thus Luthardt says, "John would have written altogether the same, if neither Plato nor Philo had ever discussed the *Logos*, or said one word on the subject." De Pressensé "knows not, in the history of human thought, contradictions more flagrant than exist between their doctrines. That which is with St. John a capital truth would be to the Jew of Alexandria appalling blasphemy." These views are styled by Keim "puerilities and prejudices of which advancing science can take no note."

The peculiar Johannine expressions to which reference has been made are first and foremost "*Logos*," then *Life*, *Truth*, *Light*, *the Paraclete*, *the Archon*, *the Pleroma*, *the Only Begotten* (both *πρωτότοκος* and *μονογενής*)—terms which, though not all of them exclusively peculiar to the Fourth Gospel, are interrelated there, and appear there as part of a system of thought descriptive of the Divine Being and his operations in the universe and his manifestation of himself to the world. Now, numerous writers boldly assert that "the fourth evangelist was a Christian disciple of Philo" (Reville, *Revue de Deux Mondes*, May, 1866, p. 107), and the modern assault on the Fourth Gospel has drawn out a multitude of interesting verbal parallels with the phraseology of Philo. We do find there *ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος*, *ὁ Λόγος Θεοῦ*, who is spoken of also as *εἰκὼν Θεοῦ*, as *πρωτόγονος*, firstborn Son, even the *ἀρχιτεχνίτης*, *ἄνθρωπος Θεοῦ*, the agency by which the world was created, and the like. A very natural conclusion at first sight is to imagine the philosophy of the treatises *Περὶ Χερουβιμ* and *Περὶ Κοσμοποιίας* to be the source, the immediate forerunner, of the language of the Fourth Gospel, and thus to relegate the author, if not into the second century (for which, however, there would be no necessity), yet away from Palestine to Alexandria or Ephesus for his spiritual instruction. We must remind our readers of the plausibility of this view arising from the fact that Philo the Jew had endeavoured, with considerable eclectic force and some learned trifling, to blend into an organic unity the Platonic theory of ideas and knowledge, the Stoic ethics, and the Hebrew revelation, to make the Pentateuch teach or sustain the Hellenic speculations. As Thoma says, "The substance of Philo's system is the Jewish religion and the Greek philosophy, which may be blended as oil and water are, but only apparently so, for, superficially mixed, they flow separately side by side." Philo used the phraseology of his philosophic school to allegorize, and so interpret, the ancient records of the faith. Just as Stoics had affected to find *their* teaching embodied in the poems of Homer, he had used this high-flown technicality to explain the various events in patriarchal history. Moreover, the same kind of place which Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews had assigned to "Christ," to "the Son," he had, at about the same time and date, ascribed to the "Divine Logos." Thus the "Rock in the wilderness," the "Bread from heaven," are explained by Philo as manifestations of the "Logos." Again, phrases corresponding with that in Heb. i. 1, 2 had been adopted by Philo, and

<sup>1</sup> See, on the subject, Professor Jowett's 'Essay on St. Paul and Philo,' Hutton's Essay, 'Historical Problems of the Fourth Gospel,' Dorner on 'History of Doctrine of the Person of Christ,' vol. i.; Canon Westcott, 'Introduction to the Study of the Gospels' and Introduction to 'Commentary'; Pye Smith, 'Scripture Testimony,' vol. ii.; Jules Simon, 'École d'Alexandrie,' Gfrörer, 'Das Jahrh. des Heils,' and also 'Philo und das Jud. Alex. Theosophie,' Soulier, 'La Doctrine du Logos chez Philon d'Alexandrie' (1876); Cæsar Morgan, D.D., 'An Investigation of the Trinity of Plato and of Philo-Judæus' (1795; new edit., 1853); Liddon (Bampton Lecture) on the Divinity of our Lord; 'Philonian Doctrine,' Jordan Bucher, 'Des Apostels Johannes Lehre vom Logos' (1856); Albrecht Thoma, 'Die Genesis des Johannis Evangeliums' (1885), pp. 32—62; Hilgenfeld, 'Das Evangelium und die Briefe Johannis nach ihrem Lehrbegriff dargestellt' (1849); Carl Siegfried, 'Philo von Alexandria als Ausleger des alten Testaments an sich selbst und nach seinem geschichtlichen Einfluss betrachtet' (1875); Ueberweg, 'History of Philosophy,' Eng. trans.; 'The Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy,' vol. i. pp. 222; Bigg, 'Christian Platonists of Alexandria' (Bampton Lecture, 1886), pp. 7—26.

by the authors of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, to denote either the "Logos," or the "Eternal Wisdom." Wherein, then, lies the difficulty? and why should we hesitate to acknowledge the Philonian origin for the Johannine phraseology and doctrinal system? On the following grounds:—

(1) Writers who urge it appear to ignore the twofold connotation of the term "Logos." Strangely enough, the term was used to denote the "reason" of a proceeding, and "the method" or instrument by which such "reason" could be conveyed or carried into effect. It is used for the self-consciousness, for the rationality, of a person, and for the "word," the account, the process, of revelation by which a person may carry his ratiocination into effect. One and the same term is used in Greek to denote the "reason" and the "word" of both God and man. The question arises—Which of these two divergent usages is that which Philo-Judæus and the Neoplatonic school generally adopted, and which do we find in the Fourth Gospel? We believe that it can be shown conclusively that the *Logos* of Philo corresponds with the archetypal reason; and the *Logos* of John is the eternal self-manifestation, the creative energy the Divine personal nature, that was the Source of both life and light in man, and has been at length embodied, incarnated, manifested, in humanity, full of grace and truth.

(2) Notice should especially be taken of the full Personality of the *Word* in the Fourth Gospel—a conception towards which the language of Wisdom touching *σοφία*, and the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews touching the eternal Son, and the language of St. Paul in Corinthians and Colossians, had prepared the way. "The Word made flesh" is identical with the Son in the bosom of the Father, who hath declared him to the world. On the contrary, the *Logos* of Philo is not an hypostasis at all; in a vast number of passages Philo's *Logos* is identified with the *κόσμος νοητός*, the intelligible world, the Divine plan of the great Architect, the idea after which the world was created or evolved. When the *Logos* is called the *εἰκὼν* of God, it is in the sense in which the power of God is shadowed forth in the creation of the world. The *Logos* between the cherubim ('De Cherubim,' p. 112) is the "plan," the "design," by which God acted in the creation and government of the world. "By his *Logos*, God *ἄρχοντα καὶ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι*, is both Governor and Good." His designs concerning the several parts of his creation are called his *λόγοι*; by these was fashioned that incorporeal and archetypal world, composed of invisible *ideas*, which is in fact his *λόγος*. Sometimes passages are quoted to show that Philo did approximate to the notion of a Divine Personality corresponding with the angel of the Lord, as when he said that the angel who met Hagar and brought her back to Sarah was the *Logos* ('De Cherubim,' p. 108). But if his exposition be examined, it will be seen that by "Hagar" he did not mean the woman Hagar, or refer to an historic event in patriarchal history, typical or otherwise, but meant *human arts and science*, and that in her departing from Sarah he saw their severance from the true virtue. She, *i.e.* science, was brought back by the Divine *Logos* to her true allegiance. In like manner, though he says that Balaam was withstood by the *Logos*, on examination (*ibid.*, ii. 4) Balaam is not the prophet of that name, but is "a foolish people riding on the ass of merchandise or agricultural pursuits, longing for a sword, a power of reason, to smite the failing beast of burden, and drawing forth its complaint more audibly than any voice, and revealing the Divine plan of life." All the historical characters are nothing more nor less than emblematic virtues, and the sum of the narratives becomes simply some phase of religious or metaphysical dogmatism. Again, it is the "archangel," the firstborn *Logos*, who throws "horse and rider into the sea." But what do these terms denote? The rider is the mind; the horse represents the passions engaged in unholly warfare with true virtue.

Philo never makes any reference whatever to the Messiah, or identifies him with the *Logos*. The notion of incarnation would have been abhorrent to him. Hence we see the most astonishing distinction between the use Philo made of this Platonic phrase in his attempt to deanthropomorphize the Old Testament references to God or the ministers in his revelation, and the use which the fourth evangelist made of the same term. With him the *Logos* becomes the historic Revelation of God, the Agency by which light has been given to men, and which at length, after ages of recorded activity, "*came into the world.*" In that *flesh* which the *Logos* became, and upon which Philonian metaphysics poured scorn, St. John says, "we saw his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

(3) While some striking superficial, metaphorical resemblances can be traced between Philo and the Fourth Gospel, it must not be forgotten that similar parallels are drawn between Philo and other books of the New Testament; and Siegfried (*ib. cit.*) has laboured with patient scholarship to trace the influence of Philo and of the Alexandrine gnosis, not only on St. Paul and St. James, but on the Targums. If he makes this good, he has abolished the inference that others have drawn from the presence of Philonian imagery and ideas in the Fourth Gospel, viz. that its author could not have been a *Palestinian Jew*. It may be well to draw attention to a few of these correspondences. Some are as vague, at least, as those which are fastened upon St. John, and some of them are far more explicit. Thus when St. Paul speaks of *κληρονόμοι Θεοῦ*, he is supposed to be thinking of Philo ('Quis rerum div. hær.,' 14), who speaks of the just as being *κληρονόμοι Θεῶν ἀγαθῶν*. "The first and second Adam" of 1 Cor. xv. 45, etc., points to 'Leg. Alleg.,' i. 12. Siegfried imagines a common source for both in the 'Midrasch.' The *βλέπομεν δὲ ἐξ ὀπίσθου* of 1 Cor. xiii. 12 is compared ('De Decalog.,' 21) with *διὰ κατόπισθον* of Philo; and many more expressions are cited by himself and by Loesner ('Observationes ad Novum Testamentum e Philone,' 1777) to demonstrate Paul's indebtedness to Philo. He finds also a similar influence exerted on the Petrine Epistles. Siegfried makes much use of Schneckenburger's ('Annotatio ad Epistolam Jacobi,' 1832) series of parallels between James and Philo. These are remarkable enough; e.g. the antithesis between *ῥυπαρά* and *λαμπρά ἐσθής* in Jas. ii. 2 is found in 'De Joseph,' p. 541, D.; "The spark which kindles a great fire" (Jas. iii. 5) with 'De Migr. Abrah.,' 407, A.; the taming of wild beasts (Jas. iii. 7) with 'De Opif. Mundi,' 19, 20; "The husbandman who waits for the precious fruits" with 'Leg. Alleg.,' ii. p. 103; "God as Father of lights" (Jas. i. 17) with Philo's *πηγὴ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἀστέρων* ('De Op. Mundi,' p. 6). And whereas James speaks of "every good giving and every perfect gift as coming from above," etc., it is supposed that Philo's language ('De Sacr. Abel et Caini,' p. 138), *ἀλόκληροι καὶ παντελεῖς αἱ τοῦ ἀγεννήτου δωρεαὶ πᾶσαι*, may have suggested it. Jas. i. 14 is compared with Philo's "In ourselves are all the treasures of evil things." The idea that the virtues are all begotten in us by God finds its parallel in 'De Cherubim,' p. 13, "Who is he that soweth good things in our souls, but the Father of all, the unbegotten God, who generateth all things?" The praise of the wisdom that is from above is compared with *σοφία ἄνωθεν δαμνηθεῖσα ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ* ('De Profug.,' 57).

The same kind of traces of relationship are found in the synoptic Gospels; e.g. Matt. v. 6 reminds of ('De Profug.,' 25) "Those who hunger and thirst after goodness (*καλοκαγαθίας*)."

The positive hints of similar relation between the Fourth Gospel and Philo, when the nomenclature or the emphasis laid on the use of the words *λόγος*, *ζωή*, *φῶς*, is excluded, are not more numerous than those found between the Judæo-Christian composition attributed to James and the writings of Philo. Some of them are, however, deeper than mere phraseology. With ch. v. 19, "The Son can do nothing of himself," etc., may be compared with ('De Conf. Ling.,' 14) "The Logos, gazing on archetypal patterns, imitating the ways of the Father, fashioned the forms thereof." Ch. vi. 50, 51 corresponds in some measure with 'Quis rerum div. hær.,' 15—a passage where "the Divine Logos is the heavenly food of the God-loving soul." Ch. xiv. 23, "We will take up our abode with him," with ('De Poster. Cain.,' 35) "The Divine Logos dwells within those in whom the life of the soul is honoured." Passages of this kind are numerous, and they do reveal a very wide diffusion, even in the Palestinian schools, of a style of expression common to the Alexandrine and Christian writers.

Such connection between the two phraseologies is admitted by Lücke, De Wette, Meyer, Lange, Delitzsch, and Alford. Delitzsch ('Bib. Psych.,' p. 178) says, "It is an undeniable fact that the Johannine Logos doctrine stands in a certain relation to the Philonian. The apostolic representation does not utterly discard the ideal forms already elaborated by Alexandrianism, but charges them with the material significance embodied in the historical fulfilment." Nevertheless, it is important to observe that many other terms and phrases of Greek life and thought are thus invested with a perfectly new significance, and transfigured until they convey entirely new ideas, such as *ἀγάπη*, *πίστις*, *δικαιοσύνη*, *ζωή*, *θάνατος*. The Platonic word *λόγος* was peculiarly serviceable, because it was capable of very diverse meanings, and was distinguished as *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*, the Logos inherent in God, corresponding with the reason in man, and



denoting the innermost "Essence of God;" and *λόγος προφορικός*, the Logos issuing from God, as "word spoken," to reveal thought and manifest activity. Philo had spoken mainly of the former under the attributes *Θεός* and the like; and he is speaking still of the former when he calls *Λόγος* the "eldest Son of the Father," "His First-Begotten," "the Image of God," "the Angel," "the Archangel," "the Demiurge," "the archetypal Light," "the High Priest," "the second God," the *κόσμος νοητικός*. The Apostle Paul claimed for Christ that he was the Wisdom and the Power of God, the Giver of light, the Creator of all things, God blessed for ever. All the promises of God were seen to be "Yea and Amen in him." The Epistle to the Hebrews declares that he was "the Effulgence of the Divine glory, the express Image of his substance," "the High Priest of our profession." Surely no word in the Greek language was so advantageous to express and blend the fulness of the Divine nature and the mission of the Lord Christ. Hence we can see many explanations of the Johannine phraseology without having any recourse to the hasty conclusion that the fourth evangelist was an Alexandrine philosopher. We see further that the language and the terminology which had been adopted by the Greek philosophic Jews was circulating in the East and in the various speculative schools of early Gnosticism; and, so far from being adopted by the writers of the New Testament, it was interpenetrated by a profoundly different philosophy, by a perfectly hostile system of ethics, and utilized in its higher senses, in its new and potent connotation, to set forth the Divine nature of One who was "manifest in the flesh," and as such was "justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

The entire method in which the fourth evangelist treats the Old Testament differs from that of Philo. St. John is not struggling to eviscerate the Bible histories of their healthy anthropomorphism. He is not translating the language of ancient history into the terms of Platonic philosophy. Moses, Jacob, and Abraham were to him historic men. The well of Jacob, the temple of Solomon, the rite of circumcision, were referred to as well-known things, without any mythic or mystic significance. The ancient Word was searched for true rather than recondite meanings. The two writers differ *toto caelo* in the attitude they severally sustain towards the Old Testament. Their conceptions of the supreme God, of the Absolute, the Infinite and Eternal One, differ profoundly. Philo exaggerated the abstraction of Plato or Aristotle, and emphasized the most subtle and transcendent expressions of the Old Testament, in order to adumbrate the indefinable and shadow forth the eternal. Numberless passages may be quoted to show how God is above all thought and praise, superior to reason, and incapable of expression by perfection or attribute; how he is ungraspable, unthinkable, unknowable, unutterable; his essence is an eternal secret; dazzling, unapproachable light is the robe of his spiritual essence, etc. To pass from these hyperbolical expressions—which are akin to Hindu pantheism or modern idealism—into the vocabulary and atmosphere of the Fourth Gospel, a new world is entered. If the writer were a pupil of Philo, he was a very audacious one, and profited very little by his master's teaching. The Johannine teaching of the "Father" explodes the whole Philonian metaphysics. Philo did, however, heap upon the Logos, whom he regarded as the bridge between the Infinite Unapproachable One and the world, every kind of glowing and splendid epithet. He called the Logos the Light and the Life, the Prophet and Interpreter of the archetypal Light, the Principle of "wisdom," Source of law, "the royal Way of true philosophy," the Ground of virtue, "the Way which leads to God," the Captain of the vessel of the soul, the Inner Voice of conscience, Accuser and Judge, as well as the Shepherd. Thoma (*loc. cit.*) has accumulated these traits with immense skill and great eloquence; but the portraiture, as a *word* of the Fourth Gospel, vanishes when we find that all this is but the tropical phrase for the discipline through which souls are passing to the rest of a true philosophy.

The Old Testament itself is the real source of the two meanings of *Logos*, and, apart even from the later teaching of the rabbis, furnished both to Paul and John the material on which their intellectual phraseology and theological system were built up.

(\*) The grand agent of the Lord in the creation of the world is in Gen. i. throughout represented as spoken word. The coming forth of light and life, of sun and stars, of man himself, is preceded by the assertion, "And God said." This had so deeply

entered into the mind of Israel that the psalmist (Ps. xxxiii. 6) says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made," where the LXX. uses the word *λόγος* for the Hebrew *דבר*. In Ps. cxlvii. 15, "The word of the Lord runneth very swiftly," is one of the terms used to describe the creative and providential government of God (cf. Isa. lv. 11).

The Targums, which represent the Palestinian teaching of the Jewish schools in their translations and paraphrases of the Old Testament, even the oldest and most precious of them, that of *Onkelos*, substitute for "God" the periphrasis of his "Word." They used continually the terms "Debura" and "Memra." Thus, "the Word of the Lord" was with Ishmael in the wilderness (Gen. xxi. 20). Jacob made a covenant that "the Word of the Lord should be his God" (Gen. xxviii. 21). In multitudes of instances "the Word" is substituted by these Aramaic translators for the direct representation of God's presence or activity. They hoped thereby in some degree to bridge the otherwise boundless distance between the Eternal One and the creatures of his hand. They sought, on the basis of Divine revelation, to maintain the communication between God and man, while striving to uphold the Divine majesty; and they sought to avoid by these means the anthropomorphisms which might lead the incautious reader into unworthy conceptions of the glory of the Lord. Siegfried attributes this usage of the Targums to Philo; but the method of the Targumist differs from that of Philo.

(b) The entire doctrine of "the angel of the Lord," which pervades the Old Testament, indicates, as within the bosom and mystery of the Divine Being, the conception of certain inherent relations of awful sublimity. The Angel or Messenger of Jehovah at times is used interchangeably with Jehovah himself, and invested with all his glory. Gen. xxxii. 24; Exod. xxxiii. 14; Hos. xii. 4; Isa. lxiii. 9; and Mal. iii. 1, convey the assurance that the manifestation, the active energy, the covenant-making grace of God is to be distinguished from the created angel, on the one hand, who is distinguished from "the Presence," and from the Eternal ONE, who, save in and through his chosen Organ and Agent, "dwells," as St. Paul says, "in unapproachable light, whom no man hath seen or can see."<sup>1</sup> The fourth evangelist expressly refers the *Adon* of Isa. vi. 1 to the pre-existent Christ, or Logos. Before him the seraphim veil their faces, and yet his voice is heard, and awful glory confounds his earthborn worshipper. This conception of the Divine Angel had been utilized by Philo, in his allegoric interpretation, to represent the operations of the Logos in the region of mental-moral discipline; but the Fourth Gospel discerns its bearing on the fundamental nature of the Lord Christ. He who had in various theophanies manifested himself to Abraham and Jacob, to Hagar and Moses, to Joshua and Manoah, to Isaiah and Zechariah, etc., "came into the world," "became flesh, and tabernacled amongst us." The preparation was laid in the Old Testament, the Alexandrines resolved it into a sacred metaphysic, the apostles into the age-long witness of the possibility of a concrete historic revelation.

Another parallel line of meditation pervades what has been called the Chokmah teaching, or the Old Testament doctrine of "wisdom," which in Alexandria, but before the days of Philo, had approached a personification of this great perfection of God, and reveals its influence on the New Testament writings. We would not say that more than a personification can be found in Prov. viii.; yet the occurrence of this phraseology within the bosom of pure Hebrew monotheism, and one which refers to such an aspect or affirmation of the Divine essence as eternal Wisdom, the Creator, Guide, and Guardian of all things, and as answering to certain peculiarities of the human consciousness and experience, is clearly an important factor in the creation of those sentiments concerning the Son which we find in the Epistles to the Colossians and Hebrews. There can be little doubt, e.g., that the author (Heb. i. 1, 2) had in mind the language of the Book of Wisdom, where phrases which the writer of the Epistle claimed to be descriptive of the Divine element in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, had already been attributed to *Wisdom*. Apart from the theology of this famous passage, it

<sup>1</sup> See dissertation on "The Angel of the Lord," in Kurtz, 'The Old Covenant,' Eng. trans., vol. i., where he criticizes his own former view and Hengstenberg's, and maintains that all the angelophanies are those of a *created* angel. But see also I. Pye Smith, 'Scripture Testimony,' vol. i.; G. Steward, 'Mediatorial Sovereignty'; Stanley Leathes, 'Witness of the Old Testament to Christ'; Liddon's Bampton Lecture, 'The Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ,' lecture ii., especially useful in tracing the Patristic view of the Theophanies.

establishes a connection between the later books and deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament and the Christian doctrine of the writer to the Hebrews, which are not only independent of Philo, but also of the author of the Fourth Gospel. It becomes probable that the doctrine, which is supposed by some to be an evolution of the *second* century, really preceded that period by some ninety or a hundred years; that it is apparent throughout Paul's letters, and especially in his earliest and most indubitably authentic Epistles. Where did Paul obtain such notions, if not from the sacred tradition of those parts of Christ's teaching which, while not absent from the synoptists (as, e.g., Matt. xi.), are most abundantly revealed in the language of the Fourth Gospel? Before the Gospel was written, it is indeed almost scientifically demonstrated that some of the disciples had thus reported and reiterated the teaching of their Lord. "This," says the Ephesian presbyter, "is the disciple which testifieth of these things, as well as wrote these things," etc. We find no difficulty in believing that Nathanael (Bartholomew), Mary of Bethany, Nicodemus and Joseph, Judas (not Iscariot), Thomas and Philip, and others of his disciples—why not Peter and Andrew?—all contributed to swell that class of record and teaching which we find so fully reported and so wonderfully enshrined in the Fourth Gospel.

3. *The author was an eye-witness of much that he describes.* Having, then, made it more than evident that the writer was a Jew, and a Jew of Palestine, we proceed, in the next place, to show that the writer was an eye-witness of that which he describes, an auditor of the discourses which he records. There is no doubt that he *wishes to be considered an eye-witness*; that he practically claims to have been such, and that a multitude of small details are given, either with a consummate art which almost conceals itself, or with the simple object of recording what made an indelible impression on his mind at the time. I am willing to admit that pseudepigraphers do adopt this method. Historical romancists, even great poets, when treating events well known in tradition, from Homer to Goethe, and from Walter Scott to living poets and novelists, know that nothing preserves the illusion of autoptic memoir better than the use of these apparently useless adjuncts of a story. Yet we think that this author, from the supplementary character of his Gospel, and from the numberless additional fragments of information which he supplies, as well as from touches which cannot (as Baur urged) be due to any theological bias, does unconsciously and unintentionally reveal the eye-witness.

Let us enumerate some of these artless traits of the presence of the writer. The references to the day and hour when so many of the memorable scenes occurred (ch. i. 29, 35, 43; xii. 1, 12; xiii. 1, etc.; xx. 1; ii. 1; iv. 43, 52; vi. 22; xi. 6, 17); the hours of the day (ch. i. 39; iii. 2; vi. 16; xiii. 30; xviii. 28).

In ch. i. 14 the phrase, "We beheld his glory," undoubtedly places the writer in the company of those who had personal and irresistible reasons for believing that he was the incarnate *Adyos* of God. This passage, however, derives strong emphasis from 1 John i. 1, where the same writer declares (not, as some German critics have assumed, what any believer might claim) that he and others, not only saw with their bodily eyes, but touched with their hands, the "Word of life." The object of the writer of that Epistle was to bring its readers into a state of fellowship with their own triumphant faith in facts and manifestations of such transcendent importance. The writer, on an occasion of awful and immense significance, viz. the piercing of the side of the Lord Jesus, declares that a strange "sign" occurred, and, in order to emphasize the fact, adds (ch. xix. 35), "And he that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is veritable; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe." The opponents of the authenticity have found, in the use of *ἑκείνος*, some proof that the writer is here only quoting a credible witness, and distinguishing himself from the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who had gone away from the cross, in his anxiety to protect the mother of the Lord; but the frequent use of *ἑκείνος* elsewhere in reference to the subject of the sentence has disposed of this suggestion (ch. ix. 37). It is certain that either the author quotes what he regarded as perfectly trustworthy testimony of one still living when he wrote, or refers to his own personal experience in the matter. The latter, from his style, is far more probable, and the fact that he was accustomed to regard himself in the third person would in this passage make a still more forcible separation in thought between himself as witness and himself as writer. It is in favour of this that the author uses the perfect rather than the aorist, which last would

have been far more appropriate if he had been referring to a testimony once for all given by a third party.

The closing words of the Gospel further solemnly associate the loved disciple with the author of the Gospel, revealing the very early tradition and the uniform testimony of the manuscripts to the identification; and there can be no question that by "the disciple whom Jesus loved"—a phrase of high significance and of tender and impressive reminiscence, not of self-confident boasting (as Keim and Weiss say)—the writer intends to indicate *himself*.

Before proceeding to show the internal evidence for this identification with the son of Zebedee, we see that the writer professes very intimate acquaintance with the feelings of the disciples themselves—he knows what they thought at the time, and how they modified their views afterwards (ch. ii. 11, 21, 22; xii. 16). The author's intimate relations both with them and the disciples of John (ch. iii. 22); the inmost converse of Jesus with his fellow-disciples (ch. iv. 1, 2); what they said "one to another" (ch. iv. 33); the conversation between Jesus, Andrew, and Philip (ch. vi. 5—9); constitute a series of touches which reveal quiet observation and deep and subtle intimacy with their feelings (ch. vi. 17, 22—24, 60—71). His knowledge of the Lord's own home appears in ch. vii. 3. Similarly, ch. xi. 3—16 gives a striking proof of his intimacy with the disciples and his knowledge of their feelings, as contrasted with the silence which he observes about the illness and death of Lazarus, beyond what came in the form of a message from the sisters (cf. ch. xii. 16 for another interesting proof). It must be admitted that he also knew what the Pharisees "said among themselves," and what "the people murmured concerning him;" but there are many sources of information open to him. Again, in ch. xii. 21—23, in the feet-washing scene (ch. xiii. 1—11), and in ch. xiv., xv., and xvi., he indicates acquaintance with the special questions that Peter, Philip, Judas, Thaddæus, Thomas, and "some of his disciples," asked on that last memorable night. The author represents himself throughout as intimate with the disciples, and in the closing scene on the Lake of Tiberias, he has artlessly represented manner, tone, and emotion, and has blended the whole into a living picture as one who knew.

4. *He represents himself as one of the disciples whom Jesus loved. This disciple shown by constructive evidence to be John the son of Zebedee.* The author appears from the first to have clung very closely to our Lord. We can scarcely resist the impression that he was a silent auditor of the conversation with Nicodemus, which obviously took place in Jerusalem (cf. ch. xix. 27), probably in that nameless disciple's own house. Again, while other disciples went to Sychar to buy bread, *one* seems to have remained with the Lord, and heard the conversation with the woman of Samaria. The fifth chapter contains an account of a visit to Jerusalem, on which the writer, and it would seem few if any other disciples, accompanied him. We learn that the beloved disciple was known to the high priest, and had a home in Jerusalem itself. This may have been in some way associated with the business of Zebedee as a fisherman, and the market for his produce in Jerusalem at the time of the public national festivals, which required certain visits to Jerusalem at these periods, and may explain the fact that John alone gives detailed accounts of the intercourse between our Lord and the Jews at Jerusalem. In ch. vi. we are once more thrown into the midst of one of the capital scenes and critical moments of the Galilæan ministry as related by the synoptists; but this writer is minutely acquainted with the sentiments of the apostles, the principal parts assigned to specific individuals, and even the inner mind of the Lord himself (ch. vi. 5, 6, 7—9). In ver. 17 there is an unconscious and unmistakable touch of the eye-witness: "Jesus was not yet come to them." The writer had been sent away with the eleven, but expected that his Lord would come to them. In ch. vi. 60, 66 he once more unintentionally reveals his presence, intimacy, and sympathy with the twelve; and while he does not become their chief spokesman, but attributes this function to Peter, yet he shares the sentiment of the group, "Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God . . . thou hast the words of eternal life." This is itself one of the proofs that there is no *animus* against Peter, who is spoken of as one of two disciples whom Jesus loved (ἐφίλει, ch. xx. 2). This is singularly impressive when we find that Peter, throughout the synoptic narrative, stands in such close and affectionate relationship with our Lord. At the Last Supper "the disciple (ὁν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς) whom Jesus loved" was "reclining (ἐν τῇ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ) in the bosom of Jesus," i.e. on his right side, at the head of the *triclinium*,

and able to ask a private question and receive an answer unnoticed by the rest (ch. xviii. 23). "Peter and this other disciple" are both with our Lord in the court of Annas (ch. xviii. 16). Peter denies his Master, and, as we learn from the synoptic narrative, went out, but "the other disciple" remained, and, while the discussion before Caiaphas is omitted by the present writer as having been fully detailed, he seems to have clung so closely to his Master that much of the converse with Pilate, omitted by the general tradition, was rescued by him from oblivion. He is, moreover, stationed by the cross (ch. xix. 25, 26), when he received the solemn commission to guard as a son the sacred mother of the Lord. In ch. xx. 2—10 the "disciple whom Jesus loved" represents himself as believing in the Resurrection, and returning (*πρὸς ταυτοὺς*) with Peter. The other most interesting reference to this unnamed disciple is in the final scenes of ch. xxi. There he is represented as the first to recognize, and not for the first time, the risen Lord. The interview with Peter is followed by the question (ver. 21), "What shall this man be [or 'do']?" (*ὁὗτος δὲ τίς*). The answer is one which led, as the writer admits, to the report (*λόγος*) "that that disciple should not die." But he declares that this was a misinterpretation of the Lord's words. To this statement there is an appendix of vast interest. The present tense (*δ μαρτυρῶν*) is used when speaking of the life-witness of that disciple, and the aorist (*ἔγραψας*) when referring to his work, and the first person plural (*οἶδαμεν*) when announcing a momentous fact about him. "We know" that this testimony is (not *ἀληθινή*, but *ἀληθής*—not "veritable," but) "trust-worthy." These words show that the verses were written by those who knew the writer and valued his living words. The testimony unhesitatingly affirms that the *disciple whom Jesus loved was the writer of the Gospel*. There is no proof whatever that this Gospel was ever circulated without this twenty-fourth verse, and consequently we possess a singularly early vindication, not only of the value of the document, but of the closely approximate identification of the author with one of the sons of Zebedee.

The group of the disciples mentioned in ch. xxi. 2 consists of (1) Simon Peter, who is especially in this scene distinguished from the nameless disciple; (2) Thomas; (3) Nathanael; (4, 5) *the two sons of Zebedee*; and (6, 7) two other of his disciples. Now, since Thomas and Nathanael are specially mentioned by name elsewhere, Nathanael is clearly distinguished from the nameless disciple in ch. i. 35, etc., and Thomas from the rest of the eleven, so it is certain that neither Peter, Thomas, nor Nathanael could have been the beloved disciple. One of the "sons of Zebedee," James, was the first of the apostles to suffer for his Lord (Acts xii. 1, 2). It remains that the epilogue asserts that he was either John the son of Zebedee or one of two others who are altogether unnamed. It has been conjectured that these may have been Andrew and Philip; but since these apostles are elsewhere mentioned by name, it is improbable that they are thus referred to, and, from being placed last, were far more probably not members of the apostolic circle at all. It would be quite in harmony with the writer's manner throughout, that he should put the two sons of Zebedee last in his enumeration of apostles. Here, in fact, the synoptic narratives and the Acts come to our aid, for throughout the former John and James, with Peter, form the innermost group of our Lord's best-loved disciples, and, from the beginning to the end, John, son of Zebedee, occupies a prominent position. Whither has he disappeared, if the disciple whom Jesus loved be not he? for if he be not the son of Zebedee, he is not once mentioned in the Fourth Gospel. Again, Peter and John are the two most prominent figures in the early Church history (Acts iii. 1, etc.; iv. 13; viii. 14; xii. 2, 3; and cf. Acts xv. with Gal. ii. 9), where Peter and John were still together with James the Lord's brother, pillars of the mother Church. Seeing that we know from the synoptic narrative that James and John were brothers, and from several passages in this Gospel and in the synoptists that Andrew and Simon Peter (or Cephas) were brothers, and that the four were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, it is next to impossible to refrain from the impression that, when in ch. i. 39, etc., Andrew, who, mentioned as the brother of Simon, is stated to be one of the two disciples of John the Baptist who followed Jesus, the other unnamed one was John the son of Zebedee. It has often been remarked that whereas the other writers speak of John the Baptist, using this appellation to distinguish him from other Johns, this Fourth Gospel never gives the Baptist any other designation than John. He may have been acquainted with the Baptist before he had acquired that well-known title which technically distinguished him.

There can be small question, and it is admitted by some of the most rationalistic of writers, that the author wishes it to be supposed that he was no other and no less than John the son of Zebedee. The author, whoever he was, by adopting a thin disguise (which was stripped off in the earliest evangelical tradition), compels his readers to conjecture that he was himself the disciple whom Jesus loved; that he was one of the twelve disciples who had companied with our Lord from his first appearance in Galilee; that he was an eye-witness of Christ's greatest deeds, and a creditable reporter of his weightiest sayings; that he was intimately familiar with the circle of our Lord's friends; and, in fact, that he was no other than the well-known younger son of Zebedee and Salome. If, however, the author were an unknown writer of the second century, he must have hazarded much by this delicate fabrication. He could neither have been a disciple nor even a contemporary of Jesus. All the subtle indications of the presence of the eye-witness must have been deliberately forged, to give weight and authority to his representation. He, whose entire portraiture is one which is avowedly designed to promote the realization of truth and to stimulate a Divine love and to nourish the life of faith, must have been aware throughout that he was romancing if not falsifying fact, creating for the sustenance of a Divine life a series of narratives, discourses, and discussions which he knew were being originated by his own fertile imagination, and nothing more. This is so harsh and unworthy an exhibition of *mala fides* without apparent motive, that it becomes very difficult to ascribe it to the author of this wonderful biography. The enormous contrast between this work and that of the apocryphal Gospels and Acts forbids our accepting the hypothesis unless under the pressure of cogent arguments which demonstrate the non-authenticity of the narrative (see Stanley Leathes, 'Witness of St. John to Christ,' Boyle Lecture for 1870).

Delft ('Grundzüge der Entwicklungs-Geschichte der Religion dargestellt,' pp. 266, etc.: 1883) has propounded an ingenious theory, that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" may have been one of the unnamed disciples who belonged to the upper classes of Jerusalem, an intimate friend of Nicodemus and Joseph, who penetrated the secret and secured the affection of Jesus, but was not one of the twelve. Delft supposes that he was the host of our Lord in Jerusalem, and peculiarly qualified to deal with the events and discourses there taking place; not the John of the synoptists or of the Apocalypse, but a veritable friend and biographer, whose name was probably John—a circumstance which led to mistaken identification with the son of Zebedee. This hypothesis, Professor Delft thinks, would save the historicity of the narrative, and ride clear of the difficulties which the supposed differences in the character of the John of the synoptists, the John of tradition, and the John of the Apocalypse have created. The only need of the hypothesis, however, turns on the reality of those supposed difficulties. The formidable objection to it is that there is no trace whatever of so immense a force as such a man would have been, in the early history of the New Testament, the Pauline Epistles, or the ecclesiastical tradition.

We must on all grounds examine the arguments which are supposed to invalidate the assumption made by the writer. They are twofold. They are external and internal.

- (1) They consist of the indications which other literature is supposed to supply of the character and life of the presumed author, and which is said to be profoundly different from the spirit and character of one who calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved."
- (2) They draw a series of contrasts between the contents of the Fourth Gospel and those of the synoptists, which are sufficiently plausible to arrest attention and provoke inquiry. Can the author be referring to the personages and to the events described in the synoptic narrative? and can the "Jesus" of Matthew be identical with the "Jesus" of the Fourth Gospel?

5. A comparison of THE AUTHOR OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL with the hints given in OTHER LITERATURE of the character of John the son of Zebedee.

- (1) The "John" of the synoptists must be compared with the author of the Fourth Gospel. If we take the synoptic Gospels as our only authorities, we should conclude that a man, by name *Zebedaios* (Mark i. 19, 20), with his wife *Salome*, had two sons, James and John; that they were the associates of two others, Simon and Andrew, in a fishing trade upon the Lake of Gennesareth; and that their home was at the town of Bethsaida, not far from Capernaum (cf. Mark i. 29; Luke v. 10).

That the name "Salome" was that of his mother is gathered from Matt. xxvii. 56

and Mark xv. 40, where the women who hovered round the cross of Jesus are enumerated, and where the name "Salome" takes the place in Mark which "the mother of Zebedee's children" occupies in Matthew's Gospel. Zebedee is not described as a poor man, but as possessed of boats, fishing tackle, and hired day labourers (Mark i. 20). Moreover, Salome (Luke viii. 3; Matt. xxvii. 55) is probably amongst the group of women who followed Jesus on some of his journeyings, and who ministered to him and to the twelve of their *substance*. The whole of this representation is remarkably confirmed by the strong reason which the exegesis of ch. xix. (see Exposition) supplies that Salome was the sister of the mother of Jesus, and was closely related to the Lord. We know that considerable profit accrued from the trade of fishing, and there was a large sale at Jerusalem of the fish taken in the Sea of Galilee for transport thither and consumption during the principal feasts. Every Israelite, says 'Baba Kama' (fol. 80. 2, referred to by Caspari, 'Chron. Introduction to Life of Christ,' Eng. trans., p. 142), had a right to engage in the fishery of the Lake of Galilee, and leaders in the trade would certainly be present in Jerusalem more frequently than others (cf. Godet, vol. i. 31; Lücke, 'Komm.,' p. 2). The mother of James and John was a zealous and enthusiastic follower of her Lord, and in Matt. xx. 20 she preferred a request, in which we dare not say that the two brothers did not sympathize, viz. that they might sit on the right and left of the King when he should come in his kingdom. It must be admitted that this revealed certain carnal, earthly views of Messiah's kingdom, and was expressive of the fierce and eager patriotism of the times. The near relationship of Salome, James, and John to the Lord may have greatly stimulated the desire on her part. That she should have entertained ideas of a temporal triumph is no more than the mother of Jesus herself indicated on more than one occasion. But if so, we learn that she was at once rebuked, and they were shown that the conditions of such honour were readiness to drink the cup and be baptized with the baptism of the Son of man. They who knew not at this moment "what they asked," learned at once a lesson which must have taught them (long before the Fourth Gospel could have been written) that which Jesus regarded as the first place in his kingdom. Moreover, the moment when Salome presented this request was immediately after Christ's most solemn announcement of his approaching death. The rebuke which he administered to the angry spirit of the remaining ten disciples, and his lesson on the royalty of service, breathes the deepest spirit of the symbolic act which so soon took place, i.e. if ch. xiii. 1, etc., be an authentic narrative. A woman who could have acted as Salome did must from the first have exercised a powerful influence on her sons, and we see that they were, in accordance with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, reckoned in the very first rank and innermost circle of the twelve apostles (Matt. x. 2; Luke vi. 4; Mark iii. 7; Acts i. 13). "Peter, James, and John" were the favoured three who were admitted to the death-chamber in the house of Jairus (Mark v. 37; Luke viii. 51), as witnesses of this great sign of his power over death. The same three were taken by the Lord into the cloud of his glory on the Mountain of Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1; Luke ix. 28; Mark ix. 2), and thus they received an overwhelming evidence of the majesty of Christ and his relation to the unseen world and the heavenly Father. They are selected, with Andrew, to hear the prophecy of the last things concerning Jerusalem and the kingdom (Mark xiii. 3), and to accompany the Lord into the mystery of his deep agony and bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 37). So far there is nothing incompatible with a word written by the author of the Fourth Gospel, though we may reasonably wonder why he should have omitted these events from his narrative. But there are hints of character recorded in the synoptic narrative which are more difficult to reconcile with the spirit of him whom Jesus loved.

Jesus gave, according to Mark's Gospel, a name to the two brethren of peculiar force. He called them "Boanerges," i.e. "Sons of Thunder" (Mark iii. 17), probably in reference to the zeal, intensity, and fervour of their character, as displayed on sundry occasions. The enthusiasm which led them to seek by baptism into death their place at the right hand of power may be one illustration of the name assigned to them; the eloquence and fervour of their speech has little historic fact to sustain it, nor is the supposition sufficiently specific. There must have been something in the character of James the brother of John which made his cruel martyrdom by Herod Agrippa pleasing to the Jews (Acts xiii. 2); and it is possible that he, as the elder of the two brothers,

may have been the more prominent of the two in the request made by Salome, and on other occasions in which we see a repressed passion, at times, storming forth from the two brethren. But John himself is described (Mark ix. 38, etc.; Luke ix. 49, etc.) as saying to our Lord, as though in sympathy with the solemn and tender words which Jesus had just uttered, "Master, we saw a certain one casting out demons in thy Name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not [thee] with us." The fact may have been put with a desire for instruction, with a possible, nay, even probable, suspicion, that the course taken was open to reproof, and we hear that he received the memorable reply, "Forbid him not; for he who is not against us is on our side." "No one who will exercise power or work a miracle (*δύναμιν*) in my Name, will be able shortly [straightway] to speak evil of me." The proceeding was simply the obverse of the passionate love John felt for his Master—a manifestation which was not altogether absent from his heart and life, even in his latest days. If the Second and Third Epistles of John are rightly attributed to him (2 Epist. 10; 3 Epist. 9—11), then the same kind of burning indignation manifests itself against those who are disloyal to the Spirit and truth of Christ. In the case of Diotrephes, we see that the aged apostle's wrath flames out against the very thing for which he had received, so many years before, the rebuke of his Lord; but there is the tone of the Son of Thunder in the remonstrance.

Another remarkable illustration of the name which our Lord bestowed upon John is given in Luke ix. 54, 55, where the two brothers are roused into indignation by the refusal of the Samaritans to receive his Master. "Master," say James and John, "willest thou that we call fire to descend from heaven to consume them? And Jesus rebuked them." The interesting addition to the text of Luke found in a few manuscripts, and supposed to be quoted from some traditional source, is on the authority of all the principal uncials and some sixty cursives, omitted by the modern editors. Here, again, James is mentioned first, and, so far as we know, was the speaker, and the two brethren are made to feel the weight of their Lord's displeasure. Yet even here there is nothing incompatible with the stormy burst of thunder which is attributed by tradition to the apostle of love in his treatment of Cerinthus. If John were the veritable recorder of the ministry of Christ among the hated Samaritans (ch. iv.), it is easy to imagine the sudden rise of wrath which linked his soul with the Elijah-ministry of his first teacher, and that the enthusiastic attachment of soul to his Master's cause should have outrun discretion, when he became the witness of the tribal hatred of the Samaritans. Nothing can be less true, even judging from the Fourth Gospel itself and the First Epistle, than the popular representation of the apostle's character, which attributes to him a spurious and effeminate softness, or a love which had no power to condemn in severe and burning and even thunderous word that disloyalty and lack of appreciation of his Lord with which he was confronted. So abundantly does the Fourth Gospel set itself to unfold the love of God in Christ Jesus and his work, that our eyes are dazzled by the light, and are not sufficiently alive to the dark shadows and terrible denunciations with which the Gospel positively abounds. In no portion of the New Testament is so formidable a representation made of the wrath of God against sin, or so severe a condemnation of the hatred of the world against Christ and his Church (Stanley Leathes; 'Witness of St. John to Christ,' lect. v.). The contrast between light and darkness is one of the themes of the prologue. In the language (ch. iii. 18, 19) of our Lord to Nicodemus, the awful judgment devolving upon unbelief is set forth; and (ch. iii. 36) either John the Baptist, or the apostle as one of his earliest disciples, describes "the wrath of God abiding" on the unbeliever. Only in the Fourth Gospel (v. 29) do we read of "the resurrection of condemnation;" and we find the traitor characterized as "a devil" (ch. vi. 70). It is the Fourth Gospel which reports Christ's own words, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, ye cannot come" (ch. vii. 34); and which represents our Lord saying, "Ye are from beneath: I am from above" (ch. viii. 23); "If ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins" (ch. viii. 24); "Ye are of your father the devil" (ch. viii. 44); "For judgment I am come into this world," etc. (ch. ix. 39). The remarkable passage of the writer's own comment (ch. xii. 37—43), in language of flaming forcefulness, denounces the unbelief of the people. Even in the valedictory discourse there is most terrible denunciation of the causeless hatred of the world (ch. xv. 25; xvi. 1—3), and the intercessory prayer records the awful description of the traitor as "the son of perdition" (ch. xvii. 12).



This considerable list of testimonies to the spirit of the writer, to the suppressed passion of stormy wrath which burned within him, is more than enough to show that the "John" of the synoptists is not in the smallest degree incompatible with the character of the author of this Fourth Gospel; while the obvious intimacy with our Lord that he shared with Peter and James does not contradict the term which he modestly attributed to himself. The intensity of John's nature was, doubtless, one of the occasions and ministrants of the Divine love to him, nor is there in the lofty conception he formed of our Lord an inconsiderable explanation of the occasional outbursts of his wrath. If he even then believed in the incarnation of the eternal life and light and love in his Master, if he was beginning to realize more deeply than the rest, the awful grandeur of the Personality of Jesus, if he found himself loving his Lord with passionate devotion,—we need not be surprised that he should resent every indication of treachery or disloyalty. At this early period he had not learned all the lessons of the compassionate tenderness and infinite sympathy of Jesus with sorrow and death, nor all the superabundance and superfluity of love which he lavished on different classes, so that he might easily have fallen into the venial error which was not, as we have seen, incompatible with the spirit of the author of the Fourth Gospel. Nay, the Gospel, by making it appear that the Lord had shown signs of special patience and kindness towards the Samaritans (ch. iv.), really explains why, at another and later period, the author should have fancied he did well to be angry, and should have desiderated the power of the Elijah-like ministry of his first teacher, and been ready to call down fire upon the Samaritan village. It should be borne in mind that this village refused to receive Christ at a moment when, in a condescension which to a Jew was simply superhuman, the Christ was willing to overlook their national estrangement, and to offer to them the blessings of his kingdom. Verily this trait of personal character has been greatly exaggerated, if it be made a reason for rejecting a conclusion abundantly confirmed by other reasons, that the author of the Fourth Gospel was the son of Zebedee.

There are no other solitary references to the Apostle John in the synoptic narrative, and by themselves they are rather explained than contradicted by the supposition of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel.

(2) *The "John" of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Galatians, compared with the author of the Fourth Gospel.* Those who dispute the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel maintain that, in the Acts of the Apostles, John occupied a position in the Church of Jerusalem and among Jewish Christians which, while compatible with the authorship of the Apocalypse, contrasts forcibly with the spiritual conception of the kingdom of God which pervades the Fourth Gospel. Let us give this objection all possible force, and even emphasize everything that these documents contain.

(a) We learn, then, from Acts i. 13 that John was tarrying at Jerusalem, and was a witness of the Ascension; that, with the mother and brethren of the Lord, who now fully believed in Christ's superhuman and sublime claims, and with the rest of the eleven, he continued in prayer and supplication, in generous mutual love, and in holy waiting for "the promise of the Father," which, said Jesus, "ye have heard of me"—waiting for "the power of the Holy Spirit," which should come upon them, and make them witnesses of Christ, not only in Judaea and Samaria, but to the end of the world. So far from this representation being incompatible with the personality and presumed knowledge of the author of the Fourth Gospel, we think that the valedictory discourse of Christ, as preserved by John, is the very best explanation that can be offered of these strange words. The "promise of the Father," the "coming of the Holy Spirit," the "return of the Lord," the greater works, and the world-witness to Christ, are the great themes of that discourse. Moreover, the very presence of the mother and brethren of Jesus in the chamber where the eleven met for worship is best explained by the statement of the Fourth Gospel, that John took the widowed and bereaved mother *εἰς τὰ ἱδια*.

(b) John took part in the election of Matthias, as one of the eleven, and in this contravenes no representation which he subsequently unconsciously makes of his own personality. The disciples appealed to the risen and glorified Lord for decision in a matter of profound interest to them all (cf. here ch. xiv. 12—14).

(c) The entire proceedings of the Day of Pentecost, in which John, without special mention of his name, took part, constitute one long fulfilment of expectations which had been excited by the words of Jesus before he suffered. The whole spirit of that

representation is that these are some of the greater works which the apostles were beginning to perform (ch. v. 20), because the Lord is exalted to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (ch. xvii. 5; xvi. 7). The Holy Spirit is given because Jesus is glorified (ch. vii. 39). Peter, the intimate friend of John, is the spokesman, but his words are a remarkable comment on the last words of the Lord as reported in the Fourth Gospel. The references which Peter made to the prophecies of Joel and of David do but confirm, by quotations from the Scripture, the great cycle of thought so prominent in ch. xii.—xvii., viz. of triumph through death and over death which is thus become the element of the glory of the Christ, the travail-pang of death issuing in a new joy and an eternal crown, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the bestowment of the free gift of the Spirit on whomsoever the Lord God should call. These phrases strikingly clothe in new words the prayer and thought of Jesus, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," and "Whosoever hath seen and learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

(d) John is mentioned by name as accompanying Peter to the temple (Acts iii. 1). The whole tenor of the discourse of Peter, who is again the spokesman, is in deep harmony with the extraordinary teaching that both he and John had received on the night of the Passion (cf. vers. 15, 16); and the conclusion of the entire transaction after Peter and John had been arrested and released is "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God *μετὰ παῖνος*." We readily grant that Peter is intent on impressing the Sanhedrin, priests, and populace with the true Messianic dignity of the Lord, notwithstanding his death; but John, if he be the author of the Fourth Gospel, was none the less impressed with the fulfilment of prophecy in the closing scenes of our Lord's life (ch. xii. 38, etc.; xiii. 18; xix. 24, 36, 37), and in ch. xx. 31 he expressly says that "these things are written, that ye may believe that *Jesus is the CHRIST, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his Name.*" The language of Peter follows the awful events of the Crucifixion and the luminous interpreting fact of the Resurrection, and is concerned to show their bearing on the world of Judaism and on the heart of unbelief. In the Gospel, written, moreover, years afterwards, when the exaltation of the Lord had by the events recorded in the Acts become a grand commonplace of Christian belief, the author reproduced the spiritual promises and hopes which the Lord had kindled within them by his valedictory discourse.

(e) Wherever the twelve apostles are spoken of in the Acts, we may suppose the Apostle John present, though we catch no word and hear no speech of him. He is, as in the Fourth Gospel, a silent presence. He allows Peter to speak for him. The Sanhedrin take knowledge of the two men, that they had been "with Jesus." Possibly a tone of Peter's voice, a flash in his companion's eye, a word of one, a look of the other, a common spirit in them both, provoked the comparison. They may, moreover, have been remembered and recognized as having been "with Jesus" on the night of the Passion and the trial—a fact which is only known to us from John's own account of the transactions. In the eighth chapter of the Acts, Peter and John went down to Samaria, to endorse with their authority the proclamation which the deacon Philip had made to the Samaritans; and to be the means of communicating those special gifts of the Holy Ghost which had been the earliest witness to the presence of the risen and glorified Lord in his Church, and "there was great joy in the city." Few things throw more light upon that joy, and the rapid success of Philip's ministry, than the memory of the visit of the Lord to Samaria, of which the Fourth Gospel retains the record. The manner in which Peter rebuked Simon the sorcerer is evidently characteristic of him; and the silent co-operation of John is another trait of that character which was bold in thought, but which did not hurry into prominence or cause his voice to be heard.

(f) When St. Paul paid his first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion, John was not present (Gal. i. 19) there, and therefore cannot be accused of taking part in any of the natural hesitancy which some of the apostles felt with reference to the reality of Saul's conversion; but when afterwards, Paul, Barnabas, Titus, and others went up from Antioch to Jerusalem, to discuss the terms of Gentile communion, though (Acts xv.) much discussion is reported, and though James the brother of our Lord and Simon Peter are described as setting forth in a liberal spirit the new law of the covenant, and as finally proposing a compromise to the Gentiles who had believed through grace, exonerating them from the bondage of Jewish customs, John is not mentioned. Again, in characteristic fashion, he retires behind the other apostles, though St. Paul (Gal. ii. 9), in

referring to the same circumstances, designates "James, Cephas, and John," as those "who seemed to be pillars" of the Church: and St. Paul speaks of their giving the right hands of fellowship to himself for an apostolate to the Gentiles. The essence of the Tübingen hypothesis is that Paul wrung a dubious and halting assent to his universalism from the pillar-apostles, and that, by the force of his character and the brilliancy of his success among the Gentiles, he compelled a temporary truce, which was afterwards broken. But there is quite enough in the synoptic narrative to show that our Lord had already laid the foundations of the spiritual Church, and had uttered principles which would destroy the Levitical Law as a condition of life. Take e.g. Matt. xv. 18—20 and Mark vii. 18—20, where Christ had declared that the heart is the source of defilement, not the neglect of ceremonial traditions. Take also Mark ii. 28, where he claimed to be "Lord of the sabbath" (cf. Matt. xii. 8). There was latent in the customary preaching of the twelve apostles what would entirely justify Paul's emancipation of the Gentile Church from the Mosaic yoke of ceremony, and explain Paul's willingness to submit the matter to the arbitrament of the Jerusalem apostles. After their wise decision, John again quietly drops out of sight. When Peter is afterwards to be blamed and withstood at Antioch, it was because some had come thither from James, who had prompted the severance, and John does not seem to have done or said anything inconsistent with the large liberality and spirituality of the first apostolic decision. "Even Barnabas," Peter, and James were carried away, at least for the moment, by Pharisaic exclusiveness; but there is not an atom of proof that John was so swept into the current. And this is the last external indication of any kind that these writings of the New Testament supply touching the personality of the son of Zebedee—verily a shadowy foundation for any specific indication of character. It is, therefore, impossible to say that the son of Zebedee may not be identified with the disciple whom Jesus loved, so far as the author of the Fourth Gospel unconsciously delineated his own portraiture. If the antagonism between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles be pressed hypothetically far beyond what the Epistle to the Galatians warrants, and is introduced as an explanation of a multiplicity of small details in the other Epistles; if the unwarrantable inference be drawn that the false apostles of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians are the Jerusalem apostles or their immediate representatives, and the Ebionitic antagonism to Paul, evinced in the pseudo-Clementine literature, be the historical fact, and must be traced back to the original relations between them;—then a multitude of other consequences follow. Then the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians must be also relinquished, and the Gospel of Marcion and the Clementine literature must be substituted for them. Then the Epistle of James must be regarded as a late and antagonistic document in reply to the "vain man" Paul, and the wide views and Pauline spirit of the First Epistle of Peter, like the Gospel of John, must be interpreted as late forgeries in the interests of comprehension and peace.

(3) *The author of the three Epistles which bear traditionally the name of John, compared with the author of the Gospel.* The evidence of antiquity in favour of the identity of authorship of the Gospel and First Epistle, and also separately in attestation of the Johannine authorship of the Epistle, is sufficient and abundant. This matter need not be here developed at length. It is necessary to recall the facts that: (a) The Muratorian Fragment on the Canon makes special mention of the First Epistle as an appendix to the Gospel, and then refers to "two Epistles" further on. (b) That the apostolic Fathers quote it. Polycarp refers to 1 John iv. 3 in his 'Epistle to Phil.,' c. vii. and iv. 9; *ibid.*, c. viii.; 'The Epistle to Diognetus' refers to or quotes, in ch. x., 1 John iv. 9 and 1 John i. 1. More important than these proofs of its existence is (c) the quotation by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 39) of the testimony of Papias, "who used passages from the First Epistle of John" (see *ante*). The celebrated quotation from Polycarp (c. vii.) has been regarded of such immense weight in the argument, that some of the opponents of the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel have sought to minimize its importance by endeavouring either to invalidate the authenticity of the epistle of Polycarp, or to represent the unknown author of the Epistle as quoting from Polycarp, instead of the reverse (see 'Supernatural Religion,' vol. ii.). The sentence is, Πᾶς γὰρ ὅς ἐν μὴ ὁμολογῇ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι, ἀντίχριστός ἐστιν. This is a striking reference to the Epistle of John. Subsequently, Tertullian

('Ad Prax.,' c. 15; 'Adv. Marc.,' iii. 8; and in other places), Irenæus ('Adv. Hær.' iii. 16), Clemens Alex., and Origen repeatedly cite it as the work of the Apostle John, as also Cyprian ('Ep.,' 28).

The opposition to the universal conviction of the Church commenced with Joseph Scaliger, who doubted the canonical value of the Epistle. Bretschneider and Paulus, who defended the common origin of the Gospel and First Epistle, yet referred both to the Presbyter John, of whose shadowy existence see above (pp. xxxii., xxxiii.). The later writers of the Tübingen school, who would find their whole attempt to reconstruct the New Testament and to account for the origin of Christianity disappear, if they admitted the genuineness of either work, account differently for the relation of the two documents to one another. Some have admitted the identity of authorship; but others, like Hilgenfeld and Dr. Davidson, have laid great stress on the deviations or discrepancies between the Gospel and the Epistle. From the difference of style, and the presumed divergence of doctrinal view, they have endeavoured to obviate the powerful argument which the identity of authorship supplies to the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel. The character of the writer as evinced in the tone of this Epistle, his reference to "antichrists" and to the "coming of the Lord," the strong antithesis he institutes between "light" and "darkness," "the Father" and "the world," form a valuable link of connection between the writer of the Fourth Gospel and the John of the synoptists and the Acts. The verbal coincidences between the Gospel and the First Epistle are very numerous: ch. xvi. 24 with 1 John i. 4; ch. xv. 18 with 1 John iii. 13; ch. viii. 34, etc., with 1 John iii. 8; ch. i. 18 with 1 John iv. 12. In the last quotation, and many others, the writer of the prologue and of the Epistle uses identical language.

It is admitted that the two documents move along the same general lines, and are concerned with the same class of expressions—"darkness and light," "knowing and not knowing God or Christ," "having sin," "laying down life for others," "taking away sin" (1 John iii. 5; ch. i. 29); references to the Paraclete (1 John ii. 1; ch. xiv. 16), to "the only begotten Son" (1 John iv. 9; ch. i. 14, 18; iii. 16, 18), and to "mutual love as the commandment of Christ" (1 John iii. 11, 16, 18; ch. xiii. 34; xv. 12, 17). The flow of the sentences corresponds to that of the prologue, and reflects the words of Jesus.

Dr. Lias, in his 'Doctrinal System of John,' has evinced with remarkable ability the correspondence between the use which St. Paul had made of the teaching of Christ preserved by tradition and recorded afterwards by John, and the doctrinal use which this writer has made in this Epistle of thoughts and words first uttered by the Divine Lord. In the ideas as Christ uttered them we have the truth in its simplest and most elementary form; in Paul's Epistles and John's Epistles we have the same thought in more direct application to the circumstances of the Church and the new currents of thought which had begun to agitate it. Paul has elaborated these teachings of Christ into long arguments, which go back to authoritative and well-understood principles and facts, and which find no such natural interpretation as that which is supplied by the sententious teaching which John has preserved for us; e.g. the New Testament Epistles do all of them build upon and elaborate the antagonism between "the flesh" and "the Spirit," as though it were a settled conclusion based upon a mutually understood principle. Take Gal. iv. 29; v. 16—22; Rom. vii.; and viii. 1, 5—17, which all reflect the teaching of Christ subsequently made public in ch. iii. and vi. In 1 John ii. 16 the *ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκός* is spoken of as *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου*, and the phrase compresses much of the Pauline teaching into a sentence (cf. Dr. Pope's 'Preface' to Haupt's 'Dissertation on the First Epistle of John,' Eng. trans.).

But objection has been taken to the identity of authorship on grounds which, when stated, have a tendency to refute themselves.

(a) Thus it is said that a grave difference reveals itself between the eschatological ideas of the Gospel and Epistle; that in the latter the *παρουσία* is anticipated (as it is in the Pauline Epistles), and that a "day of judgment" looms in the immediate future, but that in the Gospel the judgment is regarded as already past, and Christ's "second coming" is resolved into a spiritual mission to the disciples, and that Jesus will come again, only in the power of the Paraclete; further, according to the Gospel, the future and present are alike comprehended in the one idea of "eternal life." But we have to remember,

on the one hand, that, in the Gospel, our Lord does speak of a last day and of a day of judgment, when he would personally judge the world (see ch. v. 28, 29; vi. 39, 40, 44, 54). And the writer of the Epistle, while he confirms this expectation, declares that those who believe on the Son of God have "eternal life," and that "those that have the Son of God have life" (1 John v. 13). In ii. 28 he assures believers of their boldness and freedom from shame at the approaching *parousia*. The Gospel simply records Christ's words as he uttered them, and the Epistle exhibits the effect upon two generations of Christians of the whole of Christ's teaching as given in the synoptic and Johannine Gospels.

(b) Dr. Davidson says that the Gospel knows nothing of "antichrist," because, according to its "genius," "the prince of this world is cast out" by the death of Jesus, while "the Epistle speaks of many antichrists." This surely is in obvious harmony with the simple facts of the case for which the Gospel had prepared the way. The antagonism of darkness to the Logos (ch. i. 3), and the frequent forewarning against calamities, hatred, and misunderstanding from the world, abound in the valedictory discourse (ch. xv. 18, etc.; xvi. 1—4).

(c) The doctrine of the Paraclete, say opponents, is differently conceived in the two. "Indeed, the Spirit is never called 'the Paraclete' in the Epistle. Christ himself is so termed (1 John ii. 1)." "In the Epistle (the Spirit) is less closely identified with Christ. He *witnesses* and is *truth* . . . but is not identified with Christ. He is the anointing which believers receive from the Holy One," etc. But the reference to *Christ* as the Paraclete is in such subtle harmony with Christ's promise of "another Paraclete" who should abide with them for ever, that this is one of the remarkable signs of identity of authorship; while in ch. xv. 26 the Spirit's work is described as "a witnessing" concerning Christ. On the other hand, 1 John iii. 24, the *Πνεῦμα* which he (Christ) has given to us is proof that *he* Christ Jesus abideth *in* us; and the *χρίσμα ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου* (1 John ii. 20, 27) corresponds very closely with the teaching which the Church had received from the words of Jesus with reference to the baptism with the Holy Spirit and his power of leading disciples into all truth.

(d) It is said, "High as the epithets (attributed to Christ in the Epistle) are, they imply a conception of his Person inferior to those used in the Gospel." They are slightly different, we admit; but let 1 John i. 1—3 be read, *ὃ ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, etc., where the Son is spoken of in close relation to the Father (see Haupt on this passage); also 1 John ii. 14, where the *ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν μένει*, corresponds very closely with Christ's own promise, *μένειν*, with his disciples; 1 John ii. 23, "He that denieth the Son hath not the Father;" to say nothing of 1 John v. 7, 8. The eternal Word of life incarnate, the Son of God who had been manifested and come in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil, the Son, the great exhibition of Divine and eternal love, fills the whole thought of the writer, and carries into practical form the sublime aphorisms of Christ himself, while it presupposes throughout the personal dignity of the Son of God. Let it be remembered that the Gospel (with the exception of the prologue) does not with absolute certainty refer to the personal *Logos*, but has substituted for it "*the Son*;" and the final word of Divine inspiration in this Epistle leaves it beyond all doubt that the summation of apostolic doctrine is this—"We are in him that is true, that is in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the veritable God, and eternal life."

(e) Another argument is derived from the strongly anti-docetic spirit of the Epistle (which is readily conceded), as contrasted with "the almost docetic character of the Gospel." Here, says Dr. Davidson, "the *Λόγος* in some respects resembled an æon." This scarcely harmonizes with the previous objection. But not one of the Gospels laid such emphasis on the essential *humanity* of Christ as does the Fourth Gospel; e.g. his presence at the wedding-feast; his weariness with his journey; his participation in food, even after his resurrection; his anointing the eyes of the blind man with spittle; his weeping and groaning at the grave of Lazarus. His human heart and relationships are all insisted on. That Christ's bodily organization was unique belongs to each of the evangelic narratives, and not more to the Fourth Gospel than to St. Luke's. His essential Personality is in the Son of God himself.

(f) Baur and Davidson urge a different acceptance of the two references to "blood and water" in the Gospel and Epistle, saying that in ch. xix. 34 symbolic reference is made to the atoning efficacy of the death of Christ, while in 1 John v. 6 reference is

made to the two sacraments, and is a less spiritual interpretation. "If the one passage designedly refers to the other, the fact of their different acceptations implies different writers." This is a most entirely gratuitous interpretation of *both* passages (Huther). If there were any symbolical meaning in the portent of the Gospel, the evangelist does not emphasize it, but makes use of it as proof of the veritable death of Christ; and, on the other hand, the writer of the Epistle does not refer, in the water and blood wherewith Christ *came*, to the *sacraments*. If "bread" instead of or with "blood" had been mentioned, this suggestion would have been more plausible. As it stands, it has reference to the blood of his atonement which cleanses from all sins, and the water of his Spirit (the *χρίσμα*), the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which has no reference whatever to the "blood and water" of the gospel narrative. Furthermore, the reference to blood and water did not (ch. xix. 34), however, accompany Christ's *coming* so much as his *going*. To impress upon these two passages meanings that are by no means obvious, and are certainly not expressed by either writer; to insist, moreover, that the writer of the Epistle embodied in veiled form a sacramental reference to an event recorded in the Fourth Gospel, and this for the sake of instituting a contrast between them,—does not appear reasonable.

(g) Hilgenfeld urges that the Epistle stands in more intimate relationship with the Old Testament Law than the Gospel does; but his entire argument turns on the definition of "sin" given in 1 John iii. 4, where it is equated with *ἀνομία*, or lawlessness. It is, however, on the contrary, certain that the writer never uses or makes obvious reference to νόμος, while the Gospel does show the writer's acquaintance with it and reverence for it (ch. i. 17; vii. 19, 23).

(h) Dr. Davidson insists that the idea of redemption expressed in the Epistle corresponds with the doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews rather than with that of the Fourth Gospel; that whereas the latter speaks of Jesus "taking away sin," and "giving his flesh for the life of the world," the Epistle speaks of his "blood cleansing from all sin" (1 John i. 7), and that he is the *ἱλασμός* for the sins of the whole world (1 John ii. 2; iv. 10). Let it be remembered that the New Testament writers at different times use different phrases for the atoning quality of Christ's work. The same argument might show that because St. Paul speaks of Christ being set forth as *ἱλαστήριον*, in Rom. iii. 25, and states that Christ was made *καρπὸς* for us, in Gal. iii. 10, 13, he could not have written these two Epistles, which are nevertheless universally admitted to be his, even by impugnors of the Fourth Gospel. St. John, when writing the Gospel, had the synoptic narrative before him, and, while penning this Epistle, all the Epistles of Paul and Peter, and it may be *that* to the Hebrews was before him, and he adds those final touches which blend the Pauline doctrine of *ἱλασμός* and *ἀντὶ* with that of the Gospel of love and of sacrificial and vicarious death.

(i) The distinction between "venial" and "deadly" sins is urged by many as a proof that the Epistle was produced in post-apostolic times. The "sin unto death," it is said, cannot be the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit, because it is not a single act as that is—a point on which, however, the ablest critics and theologians differ. Baur finds the explanation of the two classes of sin in the Montanistic doctrine of the second century, and in Tertullian's enumeration of mortal sins. Even Hilgenfeld opposed this interpretation of the difficult passage 1 John v. 16. But the most satisfactory explanation is that John clearly saw that there was a kind of apostasy from Christ and life which precluded hope of amendment, which shut out the possibility of repentance, and concerning which the Christian could not pray for pardon as in harmony with the will of God. This view of the irremissibility of some forms of sin is more than once hinted in the Gospel (iii. 36; viii. 34; ix. 39). There is no hint of the later ecclesiastical doctrine of "venial and deadly sins."

The loose charges against the Epistle, that it is weaker in sentiment, more monotonous in style, more charged with unnecessary repetitions, can only be met by detailed exegesis. The teaching of the apostle is undoubtedly far less wonderful and original than the sayings of Jesus recorded by him in the Gospel, and it partakes of the didactic and theologic characteristics of one who sought to put into words of speculative and practical bearing the inferences which his lower inspiration drew from the remembered words of the Master. But all the essential truths concerning God and man and the Person of Christ and the means of redemption are repeated.

Surely the endeavour to separate the authorship of the First Epistle from that of the Fourth Gospel breaks down at every point. The Epistle is in all probability an appendix to the Gospel, written at a still more advanced age than was the greater document. It has thrown the light of the life of Christ upon the society which was emerging from the ruins of the entire Jewish system. It commends the love of God; it opens the prospect of eternal life and personal resemblance to the glorified Lord. It brings the teaching of the night of the Passion from the upper chamber, where all was strange expectancy, into the experience of believers in the accomplished promises of God; and it does so with certain striking revelations of personal character which help the identification of the disciple whom Jesus loved with the son of Zebedee and the Son of Thunder. This is conspicuous if the following passages be considered: ch. i. 10; ii. 4, 5—11, 16, 18, 19, 22; iii. 4, 6, 8, 12, 15; iv. 3; v. 10, 16, 21. In these verses the spirit which was ready to call fire from heaven upon the unbelieving Samaritans, and which forebade the miracle-worker to proceed because he followed not the apostles, is undeniably present; while in every verse of the Epistle there breathes the spirit of close intimacy with Jesus, and a most vivid appreciation of the last and noblest manifestation of the eternal love.

Holtzmann, 'Einleitung' (1885), p. 463, etc., though referring to the points of difference between the teaching of the two documents, admits the identity of authorship; but seems undecided as to their relative priority.

*This leads us to the Second and Third Epistles of John, so far as they reveal the character of their author.*

There is by no means so general an assent either to the apostolic origin of these Epistles or even to their canonicity, and many advocates of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel are not prepared to admit that they proceeded from the author either of the Gospel or the First Epistle. The brevity of these Epistles may account for their absence in the Peschito Syriac, and the silence of the apostolic Fathers,—yet on the other hand, Ephrem Syrus quotes them; and their private character may have kept them from general circulation as sacred writings,—yet so early as the date of Clemens Alexandrinus that Father writes, "The Second Epistle of John, which is written to virgins, is very simple; it was indeed addressed to a certain Babylonian lady called *Electa*." In Strom. ii. p. 264 he speaks of "the greater Epistle," showing that he knew of two. Ver. 11 is quoted by Irenæus ('Adv. Hær.' i. 16. 3): "John, the disciple of the Lord, pronounced their condemnation, having counselled them that salutation should not be uttered by you to them," etc.; further he quotes vers. 7 and 8 as part of the First Epistle. So that the Second Epistle was known and regarded as the Apostle John's composition towards the close of the second century by leading Fathers in Alexandria and Gaul. Origen did not speak positively of the apostolic origin of the Second and Third Epistles. He says (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' vi. 25) that "all do not admit that they are his very own (*γνησίους*)." His pupil, Dionysius of Alexandria, quoted both the Second and Third Epistles as written by John, in proof that John could not be the author of the Apocalypse (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' vii. 25).

Eusebius himself speaks of the Second and Third Epistles as "named after John, whether that of the evangelist or of some other person of the like name" ('Hist. Eccl.' iii. 25). Thus he reckoned them among the antilegomena somewhat doubtfully. The Muratorian Canon leaves it doubtful whether the writer meant the Second and Third, or the First and Second Epistles, as part of his canon of orthodox Scripture. They were rejected by Theodore of Mopsuestia. Theodoret does not mention them. After Eusebius their canonicity is unquestioned, though their apostolic origin is still open to doubt. Jerome (in his 'De Viris Illus.' s.v. 'Papias,' 18), referring to the fragment of Papias (preserved by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.' iii. 39), in which John the elder and Ariston are spoken of as *μαθηταί* of Christ, recounts the tradition, held by some, that the Second and Third Epistles were the work of the presbyter, not of the apostle, and in c. ix., *ibid.*, in the remarks concerning John the apostle, Jerome refers again to the same tradition, and says that the sepulchre of the presbyter as well as that of John the apostle were shown in his day at Ephesus. Still, he adds, "Some think that the two (*memoriæ*)

<sup>1</sup> This is found in the 'Adumbrationes in Epis. Joannis ii.' p. 1011.

supposed memorials were of the one and same John the apostle," indicating an obscurity among the guides in the city as to the true resting-place of John the apostle. But Jerome had not finally concluded in favour of this mythical John the presbyter, for he enumerates seven Catholic Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Judas ('Epist. ii. ad Paulinum'). In referring (p. xxxiii.) to the fragment of Papias preserved by Eusebius, we have seen how much reason there is for doubt as to the interpretation which Eusebius put upon this passage of Papias, and also the very small and shadowy evidence that exists for the tradition that there was any veritable individual answering to the misunderstood suggestion of Papias. Of late years Riggensbach ('Leben Jesu,' French trans., pp. 59, 60), Zahn ('Studien u. Kritiken,' p. 662: 1866), Dr. Milligan (*Journal of Bibl. Literature*), Dr. Farrar (*Expositor*, November, 1881, and 'Early Years of Christianity,' vol. ii.), have thrown the gravest doubts upon his personality. Nevertheless, Ebrard, in his 'Commentary and Introduction to the Epistles of John,' has powerfully defended his coexistence with St. John in Ephesus, and has referred to the presbyter the composition of the Second and Third Epistles. He has done this on the following grounds: (a) that *ὁ πρεσβύτερος* was a title which John would not have assumed to the disregard of the other presbyters of the Church; (b) that the Presbyter John might have done so simply with the view of discriminating himself from the grand personality of the aged and venerable apostle; (c) that Diotrephes would not have been likely to have prated with malicious words against the last of the apostles, though he might against a secondary and less dignified person.

A large number of distinguished critics, while holding to the existence of the Presbyter John, see little or nothing in this argument. Thus Huther, Godet, Ewald, Lücke, Disterdieck, Holtzmann, Bishop Alexander ('Speaker's Commentary'), maintain that the two brief Epistles are from the same hand; that the negative and positive evidence points to the same author as that of the First Epistle and of the Gospel; that there is the same reticence or verbal silence in them as to the "Church" as an institution, though the idea pervades the several documents; that the full title "Lord Jesus Christ" never occurs in any one of them; that there is no definite reference in either of them to the sacramental system of the early Church; that the author warns us in the First Epistle against the danger (a) of denying the true Christ, the danger (b) of failing in true love to the brethren, the danger (c) of not observing Christ's commandments; and finally, that the author adopts a whole vocabulary of expressions which are peculiar to the other Johannine writings. Thus abridging Bishop Alexander's note—

2 EPISTLE.	3 EPISTLE.	GOSPEL.	1 EPISTLE.
* <i>Ἀληθεία</i> , five times (vers. 1—4)	Vers. 3, 4, 8 (twice), 12	Continuously	Very frequently
* <i>Ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν</i> (ver. 1)		viii. 32	ii. 21
<i>Περὶ πατεῖν</i> (vers. 4, 6, twice)	Vers. 3, 4	viii. 14, etc.; xi. 9; xii. 35	i. 6, 7; ii. 6 (twice), 11
* <i>Ἀγάπη</i> ... <i>ἐντολή</i> (ver. 6)		Continuously	v. 3
* <i>Ἀντίχριστος</i> (ver. 7)			ii. 18, 22; iv. 3
<i>Χαρά</i> . . . <i>πεπληρωμένη</i> (ver. 12)		xv. 11; xvi. 24, etc.	i. 4

(a) In the allegation that John would not have called himself "the presbyter," we are naturally reminded that St. Peter (1 Epist. v. 1) calls himself a *συμπρεσβύτερος*, and that the word must have had in this place a technical meaning. The modest manner in which James, Peter, and Jude, as well as the author of these Epistles and the Apocalypse, describe their own functions or official position, undoubtedly contrasts itself with the repeated insistence on the position of apostle which characterizes the Epistles of Paul. The age and solitary dignity of St. John would find abundant embodiment in the use of this term, so well known and apprehended throughout the Greek cities of Asia Minor. If it be John, he simply adopted here, as elsewhere, the least assuming of the dignities which belonged to him—the governor, referee, teacher,



or guide, who might on this basis have felt that there would naturally unfold itself the office of a bishop, or angel, or apostle, as the case might demand. Luthardt ('St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel,' p. 132) criticizes very successfully Eusebius's inferences from the fragment of Papias, and shows that not only does this passage give the title of elder to the apostles, but that Irenæus calls Polycarp *μακάριος καὶ ἀποστολικὸς πρεσβύτερος*, and, writing to Soter, Bishop of Rome, speaks of his predecessors as *οἱ πρὸ σου πρεσβύτεροι*. Let us also add that Papias explicitly calls Andrew, Peter, John, Philip, and others "elders," from the report of whose conversation he derived so much information. (b) The allegation that the Presbyter John, if there was such a personage, may also have used such a designation, is certainly possible, though it is nothing more than conjecture; and (3) that Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence, should have prated against the apostle is only akin to the treatment which the apostles were likely to have received and did receive from their contemporaries. This is too abundantly clear from the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians, and from the consolations offered by Peter to the victims of angry recrimination.

It is more than probable that Papias discriminated the reports which reached him second-hand concerning the several "elders" whom he mentions by name, from the immense advantage which he also found in listening to the positive teaching of two disciples, the elder John and Aristion, who were yet living in his own time. Eusebius most likely was in error in inferring that Papias had spoken of *two* Johns; and the conclusion to which we incline here is that this fragment simply fastens upon the Apostle John himself the very title which he assumed in writing these leaflets.

What, then, do we gather of the character of their author? There is the same general limpid and easy concatenation of sentences, each one an aphorism, which characterizes the other words of the apostle in the prologue and epilogues of the Gospel and First Epistle. The Epistles breathe the same atmosphere of love, the same chivalrous regard for the truth, the same loyalty to Jesus Christ, the same willingness to denounce the spirit of antichrist and error. With no honeyed words, but in terrible earnest, he preaches the sanctity of truth and the certainty of Divine revelation, and refuses even the rights of hospitality to one who comes (*ἐρχεται*) summoning the house of God in the name of antichrist, with alien and unchristian doctrine. The language thus addressed to *Kyria* (2 John) and to *Gaius* with reference to Diotrephes is not regarded, even by Ebrard, as opposed to the character of the author of the Fourth Gospel, and, together with the similar outspoken loyalty to Christ seen in the First Epistle, reveals another but very significant indication of the character of the son of Zebedee, as vaguely hinted at in the synoptic Gospels (see pp. lv.—lviii.).

The two shorter Epistles appear to us a singularly interesting link of relation between the author of the Gospel and the author of the Apocalypse—between the "disciple whom Jesus loved" and the John of the synoptists.

(4) *A comparison between the author of the Fourth Gospel and the author of the Apocalypse.* This great question is intimately inwoven with that of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The superficial contrast between these two documents is so great that from early times, and on internal grounds, the apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse has been disputed, and though external testimony is of a powerful and impressive kind, yet, from a variety of reasons, it was referred to a different author. Eusebius, from his own anti-chiliasm, Dionysius of Alexandria (A.D. 247), from his dislike to its material symbolism, and from sundry other critical grounds, disputed its apostolic authorship. Numerous modern critics—Ewald, Credner, De Wette, Lücke, Neander, Düsterdieck—who have defended the Johannine origin of the Gospel, have done so by repudiating the apostolicity of the Apocalypse, and they have rid themselves from some of the gravest perplexities in the argument for the former by exaggerating the contrasts, both in language, style, and matter, between the Gospel and the Revelation. The Presbyter John has been again and again summoned from the differently interpreted passage of Papias to take the place of the apostle, and to account for a certain deficiency of external testimony to its early admission into the New Testament canon; while a certain unknown John has been the resort of others.

On the other side, a considerable number of those who dispute the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel—Baur, Schweigler, Hilgenfeld, Zeller, Davidson—do so with the aid of a strong conviction of the apostolic and Johannine authorship of the Apoca-

lypse. With some extreme writers, the Apocalypse is the only certainly authentic document of the New Testament, and it is made use of to demolish the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel. It would seem with many to be an entirely accepted principle that one and the same mind could not at any interval of time, and granting any diversity of conditions, have produced what is regarded as the tremendous allegoric manifesto of the kingdom of God against the world-powers, and what is believed to be the sacred, tender, mystic, theological romance called the Fourth Gospel. This polemic has been augmented in intensity, and further complicated with the purpose, and still more with the date, of the Apocalyptic vision.

These pages must not be occupied with any attempt to determine the date of the Apocalypse, which will be amply discussed in its proper place. The arguments for the early and later dates are alike strong, though very diverse and independent of each other. It will be admitted on all sides that the external evidence for the later date is far stronger than that for the earlier, and that the bulk of the evidence for the *early* date is, on the other hand, strictly speaking, derived from purely internal considerations, based on the supposition that Jerusalem must be still standing when the visions were seen, and that certain obscure allusions to Roman emperors, and the interpretation of the beast and his number, as well as the "false prophet," have one particular application. This is a question of pure exegesis, and will not here be discussed; but it is impossible to say that the question is now finally decided. The complicated reasoning on both sides may be seen in Davidson, Moses Stuart, Renan, Farrar, on the one side; and Hengstenberg, Elliott, Lücke, etc., on the other. It must be admitted that the earlier date reduces the difficulty of believing that the author of the Apocalypse could, in the course of a quarter of a century, have passed into a different phase of mind and manner of expression; that he who in his more fiery youth or early manhood saw the visions and vials, and heard the trumpets and the thunders, of the Apocalypse, might, after many strange experiences, and long pondering the essence of these revelations, have, in his mellow age, succeeded in recording his earlier reminiscences, and in a style too of Greek diction far more free from Hebraisms and Judaic allusions than that of the Apocalypse, which reflected the influence upon him of a long residence in Ephesus where much purer Greek than that of his youth had become a second nature to him. The style, the artistic touch, the musical taste, the handwriting of a man of fifty, will often materially differ from those which have become natural to him when between eighty and ninety years of age. However great the contrast between the styles and diction of two compositions, an interval of forty years in the life of an author, passed under new conditions, and a profoundly different purpose in view, will almost account for any amount of change. Let the early and latest productions of Thomas Carlyle be compared, and the diversity is unspeakably great, although there may yet remain in both subtle marks of identity, akin to those which link the two Johannine books. Milton's 'Comus' and 'Paradise Regained,' Dr. Watts's 'Lyric on the Giving of the Law' and his 'Moral Songs,' Burke's 'Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful' and his 'Reflections on the French Revolution' or his 'Speech at Bristol,' present remarkable contrasts of contour, of vocabulary, of sentence-structure, and the like.

But it is far from certain that differences of the kind referred to are more due to lapse of time than to utter diversity of mental conditions. Style, vocabulary, dialectic tone, are easily adopted, are veritably changed, by a mind that deliberately puts itself upon an entirely different platform, and voluntarily adopts a fresh outlook; e.g. Wordsworth cherished and exercised two entirely different styles of expression, and, though a certain sameness of mannerism may have linked them together and may be revealed in both styles, the contrast is very pronounced. His peculiarity is that he, by turns, adopted both styles throughout his life. The very essence of dramatic power lies in the faculty of looking with different eyes at the same group of ideas, and speaking with different tongues concerning them. The New Testament offers remarkable illustration of the same kind of variety, though the opponents of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel will not admit the justness of the illustration. Every one concedes great difference in the style of the Epistle to the Galatians and the First Epistle to Timothy, yet the evidence for their common authorship grows with every year of study and meditation, and it is based, not so much upon a period of time that elapsed between them, as on the totally different state of mind in which the apostle was when he

publicly and vigorously assailed some erring and apostate Churches, and that in which he privately and lovingly advised a young friend with reference to his religious and ministerial difficulties.

So it may be easily conceded that the state of mind in which the beloved disciple pondered the sublime memories of the life of the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, differed absolutely from that in which the same apostle, wrapped in the cloud of a sacred imagination, and inspired of God, gazed on the ineffable mysteries of the unseen world, and strove to put into symbolic language that which passed all understanding and all speech. The prophet and the historian have two distinct groups of characteristics which do not clash; but the same man may, and often does, bear the weight and responsibilities of both. Memory differs from fancy, but the same thinker may blend them both with their appropriate phraseology, and may exercise them alternately. In the Gospel is given to us the profoundly reflective record and arrangement of the human and earthly manifestation of the eternal Word, his conflict with the world, his glorification in death, and his triumph over it in the Divine power that was his intrinsic and everlasting possession. In the Apocalypse he reveals the dominion and triumph of the same Word of God when delivered from temporal conditions, and through the picturesque symbolism common to the seers of invisible things. Dr. Davidson does not think that this will account for the disregard of the rules of Greek syntax, and the use of barbaric dialect, and urges that Isaiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets were not so lifted out of their ordinary habits of expression and thought in their visions as to constitute two Hebrew styles. But, as we shall see, the Apocalypse reveals abundant proof of the richness even of a classic vocabulary, and that we have not the same opportunity of contrasting two prophetic styles, notwithstanding what has been done by a certain school of criticism to disintegrate the prophecies of Isaiah and Zechariah. So, then, whichever view may be taken of the date of the Apocalypse, the contrasts of style are not so great as to destroy the identity of authorship. The hypothesis of an interval of many years between them may make the problem easier of solution. The hypothesis of the twofold state of mind may also account for a nearer juxtaposition in time. The entire phenomena of prophetic vision and ecstasy will account for the adoption of the dialect more familiar in earlier years, when phrases were minted in the vocabulary of Palestine, and enriched by the abundant prophetic and apocryphal literature which circulated among the people.

Let us proceed, then, (a) to adduce the evidence for the *Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse*, in entire independence of the question either of the date of its publication, or the supposed incompatibility of this document with that of the Fourth Gospel; (b) to indicate the *points of agreement, and divergence of style, teaching, and method* of the two works.

(a) *The internal evidence.* This is allowed on many sides, and by strong opponents of the authenticity of the Gospel, to be satisfactory and impressive, although it assumes a somewhat apologetic character.

(i.) The writer calls himself by the name of *John* (Ἰωάννης or Ἰωάνης, equivalent to ἰωάν, either "Jehovah is merciful," or "the grace of Jehovah." The name is transliterated by the LXX., Ἰωάν, 2 Kings xxv. 23, a name which appears in the New Testament, in some manuscripts, for the Ἰωάννης of other manuscripts). This in itself might be a stumbling-block from the reticence with reference to his own name which the author of the Fourth Gospel preserves throughout the Gospel and Epistles. He calls himself a "servant," a "bond-slave," of Jesus Christ. This is perfectly compatible with his modest assumptions and self-oblivation. St. Paul (Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 10; Phil. i. 1; Titus i. 1) thus designates himself, though, when occasion arises, he can and does lay great emphasis upon his apostolic commission. In addressing the Churches in Asia, "John" speaks of himself (Rev. i. 9) as "your brother" and "your companion (συγκαίωτος ἐν τῇ θλίψει)," the latter term being adopted by St. Paul (1 Cor. ix. 23; Phil. i. 7), while the former repeatedly occurs in Paul's Epistles, and the idea pervades the Gospels. He calls himself "a prophet," and classes himself among "the prophets" (Rev. xxii. 9; see also x. 7) of the New Testament—a term which is repeatedly used in close association with apostles; the two circles of connotation overlapping one another;—all apostles may not have been prophets, nor all prophets apostles, but some apostles were prophets. The objection is taken by some to the fact

that he would not have spoken of "the twelve apostles of the Lamb," if he had considered himself to have been one of the number (Rev. xviii. 20; xxi. 14). The Apostle Paul, however, does speak of "the apostles" in the third person (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iii. 5, in which latter passage he uses the very image which the apocalypticist treats more pictorially). Seeing that even the synoptic Gospels record Christ's own declaration that his kingdom and Church as an edifice was built upon the *πέτρα* of Peter, and upon his solemn confession (Matt. xvi. 18), there is no greater difficulty in the fact that John should refer to the apostolic foundations of the new Jerusalem.

(ii.) The writer declares himself to be one "who bare witness to the Logos of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ." This phrase, if it does not positively identify him with the author of the Fourth Gospel, puts him in the nearest circle of the Lord's disciples; and this cannot apply to any other John mentioned in the New Testament. Neither the "John" of the Fourth Gospel, viz. "the Baptist," nor "John Mark" (Acts xii. 12), nor the John, or "Jonas," the father of Peter (Revised Version text of John i. 43 and xxi. 15), nor the John who was one of the Sadducæan party (Acts iv. 6), could by any possibility have been the author of the Apocalypse. Nevertheless, the "John" was a well-known personage standing in close relationship to the Churches of Asia, and representing himself as intimately acquainted with the risen and glorified Lord. In Acts xii. 2 "James the brother of John" is referred to, and the synoptic narrative leaves no option as to the fact that this *John* was the son of Zebedee.

(iii.) The great similarity between the John of the synoptists, of the Acts, of the Epistle to the Galatians, and the John of the Apocalypse, has been a standing argument with the opponents of the Fourth Gospel. We have already shown that, so far as these features of character are supposed to indicate a fiery, impulsive, revengeful, ambitious spirit, they have been grossly exaggerated. It will readily be conceded that they do reveal a Jewish, rather than a spiritual, conception of the Messiah, at that particular stage in the apostle's history; but one perfectly compatible also with the severe side of his character, which is far from being concealed in the narratives and portraiture of the Fourth Gospel. They reveal the training which may account for the visions of wrath and justice which the Jewish and heathen enemies of the Lamb of God will have ultimately meted out to them. But the entire structure and purpose of the Gospel of John are so strangely similar and parallel to the structure and significance of the Apocalypse, that *that* Gospel, as well as the synoptic Gospels, becomes a tetrachordon of evidence to the authenticity of the Apocalypse. This will, however, require, and receive a little later, more careful attention. Apart from the Fourth Gospel, the *internal* evidence for the apostolicity of the Revelation cannot be said to be so copious or important as its opponents assume. It is readily accepted by many critics of the Tübingen school, though similar arguments for the Fourth Gospel are summarily rejected.

(iv.) The writer declares that he was in "the island of Patmos, by reason of the Logos of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 9). The external evidence that John the son of Zebedee did suffer exile in that island is conclusive. It is to the following effect:—

Jerome ('De Viris Illust.,' c. 19): "In his fourteenth year, Domitian having instigated a second persecution after Nero, John, the apostle whom Jesus loved, was exiled to the island Patmos, and wrote the Apocalypse." And Irenæus (quoted by Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.,' v. 8) says, "John beheld the vision, almost in our generation, towards the end of the reign of Domitian." A statement as bearing on the date is elsewhere repeated by Irenæus ('Hær.,' ii. 22. 5); and Eusebius adds the remark, "John, at once apostle and evangelist, as is reported, while still continuing in life, was condemned to dwell in the island of Patmos, on account of the testimony which he bore to the Divine Word." Corresponding references to the same fact occur in Clemens Alex. and in Origen (quoted by Eusebius), and in his commentary on Matthew he cites Rev. i. 9 in proof of the fact of John's virtual martyrdom.

Hippolytus ('De Christo et Antichr.,' c. 36), referring to the Apocalypse of John, says of its author, "who, when on the isle of Patmos, saw the apocalypse."

The preface to the later Syriac Version, given in Walton's Polyglott, runs thus: "The revelation which was given by God to the Evangelist John, on the island of Patmos, on which he was cast by Nero Cæsar."

These various references are, it must be admitted, made by those who accepted the apostolic origin of the Revelation, and had the document before them which gave them the information; still, the statement is variously made, and appears to rest on other "report" as well. Such confirmation is valuable as *external* evidence to one striking touch of local colouring, though the *date* of the exile is differently conceived by the authorities. The fitness of the place, as providing much of the scenery of the mighty drama which followed, is brilliantly expanded by Dean Stanley, 'Sermons in the East' (1862).

(v.) The relation of John to the Churches of Asia is another of those internal marks of authenticity of great weight. Rev. i.—iii. show that the author stood towards them in the position of guide, patron, censor, and as superior to their chief minister or "angel." This position could not have been assumed during the period of Paul's ministry, or that of Timothy. The tone differs from that assumed by Paul in his First Epistle to Timothy; nor does the Epistle to the Ephesians or Colossians give any hint of the state of things revealed in references to the Churches of proconsular Asia. Moreover, till a period coincident with Paul's ministry at Ephesus, John was a "pillar" of the Church in Jerusalem. Ecclesiastical tradition is largely concerned with such a residence of John in Ephesus after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some critics, whose entire theory of the New Testament canon turns upon the early date of the Apocalypse, endeavour to repudiate or refute the historical character of John's residence in Asia; but the evidence is so varied in favour of this residence at Ephesus, at a later rather than an earlier period, that it will not be overthrown, and consequently we have here a very powerful corroboration of the obvious implications of the documents themselves.

Thus Polycrates, a Bishop of Ephesus, a contemporary of Irenæus, in his letter to Victor of Rome, as quoted by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' v. 24) in a passage which links together the author of the Fourth Gospel and Apocalypse, as follows, says, "Moreover, John, he who leaned on the Lord's bosom (ch. xiii. 25), who came to be a priest, who wore the *πέταλον* [the golden frontlet], and a witness and teacher, he has fallen asleep in Ephesus." This is rejected by some as fantastic and untrustworthy, but it cannot be denied that these two more ancient documents are thus connected, and that St. John's residence and death in Ephesus were referred to by one who lived where the traditions of his life and work must have been vivid.

Clemens Alex. says ('Quis Dives Salv.,' c. 42), "When the tyrant was dead [in all probability meaning Domitian], he departed from the island Patmos to Ephesus."

Irenæus ('Adv. Hær.,' ii. 22. 6; iii. 1. 1) declares that "John, the Lord's disciple, he that leaned on his bosom, published the Gospel at Ephesus during his abode in Asia."

Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 23) quotes, on the authority of Clemens Alex., the interesting passage in which St. John is represented, in his old age, seeking and reclaiming the young robber, and in this connection adds, "The Apostle and Evangelist John organized the Churches that were in Asia when he returned from his exile in the island after the death of Domitian" (cf. *ibid.*, iii. 1, 18, 31).

Justin Martyr, in 'Dial. cum Trypho,' c. 81, describing an interview which took place on Ephesus, refers by name to the "Apocalypse" as the work of "a certain man John, one of the apostles of Christ," and speaks of his ministry and teaching as taking place "*παρ' ἡμῖν*, among us."

Apollonius (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.,' v. 18), a writer against Montanism in the second century, says that "John wrote the Apocalypse, and that he is said to have raised a dead man to life by Divine power, in Ephesus."

Jerome ('De Viris Ill.,' c. 9) says that "John was buried in Ephesus."

A statement made at the Council of Ephesus, that "the Virgin Mary accompanied John to Ephesus, and that he died and was buried there," was first mentioned by Epiphanius ('Hær.,' 78. 11).

Dr. Davidson says, "The place where he wrote was Asia Minor, probably Ephesus itself, to which he had returned from Patmos."

These testimonies are adduced as powerfully corroborating the statement of the Apocalypse itself, that it was produced by one who stood in intimate relations with the Churches of proconsular Asia. This internal evidence is conclusive when thus backed up by a tradition so widely diffused.

Keim ('Jesus von Nazara,' Eng. trans., vol. i. pp. 143, 207), while accepting the

statements of Irenæus and others, which bring the Fourth Gospel into the reign of Trajan, holds that the John who wrote both it and the Apocalypse was not the son of Zebedee, but the presbyter. He charges the mistake on Irenæus, from whom, as he thinks, other writers derived it. His position is that John *never was at Ephesus at all*; that Papias cannot be made to say that he had any knowledge of the apostles; and that the John of whom he and Polycarp were the "hearers" was the "presbyter;" that the low position in which John, as an apostle, is placed in Papias' list of disciples shows that he had no more to do with Asia Minor than Matthew, and that Papias derived his information second-hand.

Now, there is a distinct contrast in Papias's language between what the "elders," including John, *said*, and what the elder John and Aristion *say*. It does not positively declare that he had personal intercourse with either the first or the second group, and the most probable interpretation is that the two last mentioned were still living when he wrote. It does not follow, because a young man has seen and conversed on certain occasions with an eminent living statesman or prelate, that he should not also have taken the opportunity of making further inquiries about them. See Bishop Lightfoot's (*Contemporary Review*, vol. xxv., xxvi.) explanation of the order in which the apostles are mentioned in the fragment of Papias (a remark in which Dr. A. Roberts had anticipated him, 'Discussions of the Gospels')—an order which curiously corresponds with the order in which they occur in John's Gospel. The statements of Irenæus are too clear, detailed, and vivid to justify the supposition that Polycarp had so utterly blundered and misled him (see Charteris, 'Canonicity,' § vi. p. xlv.).

(8) *The external evidence for the apostolic authorship is abundant and irresistible.*

\* \* This evidence is important to our general argument, for the authenticity of the Apocalypse is, in our opinion, a powerful corroboration of the apostolicity of the Fourth Gospel.

The 'Shepherd' of *Hermas*, written probably about A.D. 142, during the occupation of the bishopric of Rome by his brother Pius, does not cite the Apocalypse by name, but the numberless similarities of expression lead competent critics to believe that he **must** have been familiar with it. Thus 'Vis.,' ii. 2. 7, "Blessed are ye as many as patiently endure the great affliction that is coming upon you" (cf. Rev. vii. 14). The reference to "the book of life," in which some names are written and others blotted out ('Vis.,' i. 3. 2; 'Sim.,' ix. 24. 4), may be explained by familiarity with Exod. xxxii. 32; Dan. xii. 1; but more probably by acquaintance with Rev. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xx. 12; and Hermas speaks of an altar before God's throne where prayers are presented ('Mand.,' x. 3. 2; cf. Rev. viii. 3). The Church is a woman ('Vis.,' ii. 4. 1; cf. Rev. xii. 1); and many other more obscure allusions.

The earliest testimony that we possess comes to us in a second-hand and roundabout fashion. Towards the close of the fifth century, Andreas, Bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, wrote a commentary on the Revelation; and in the prolegomena, which Arethas, his successor in the episcopate, wrote (one based on the work of his predecessor), he claims in favour of its inspired character (*θεοπνεύματος*) the authority of Gregory of Nazianzus and Cyril, and to these he adds the opinion of still earlier witnesses, Papias, Irenæus, Methodius, and Hippolytus, who testified to its being *ἀξιολόγου*, i.e. worthy of confidence. If this was really the opinion of Papias, it is a very powerful confirmation of its authenticity. The reason which gives it so much weight is that Andreas and Arethas both appear to have had Papias's entire work before them, and to have referred to Papias's quotation of Rev. xii. 7, with the remark of Papias, *Εἰς οὐδὲν συνέβη τελευτῆσαι τὴν τὰς αὐτῶν*, introduced thus: "This also is the tradition of the Fathers, and of Papias, the successor (*διδάχος*) of the Evangelist John, whose Apocalypse is lying before me."

Now, the fragments of Papias that have been preserved by Eusebius do not mention the Apocalypse. This is remarkable, because Eusebius does not cite testimonies as a rule to books that have been universally received, but rather the opinions of the ancient writers concerning those which were doubtful; and he was, moreover, himself disposed to undervalue the Apocalypse. His strong objection to *chiliasm*, or millenarian notions, gave him a prejudice against Papias as well as the Apocalypse; yet he **does** charge Papias with retailing the hope of a corporeal reign of Christ on earth, which is to last a thousand years after the resurrection, without referring to the origin of the hope. **There is no reason to doubt that the "narratives of the Lord's oracles" did contain what**

Arethas said they did. Even the author of 'Supernatural Religion' considers this a valid proof of the opinions of Papias.

Though Irenæus ('Hær.,' v. 33, 34) refers to Papias as "a hearer of John," together with Polycarp, Eusebius, in his comment on the passage, considers that he only received his intelligence concerning John the apostle through the medium of John the presbyter. Critics have subsequently made this shadowy individual to be the source of all the information on which Papias prided himself. Some have argued, moreover, that John the presbyter was the author of the Apocalypse (Lücke), while Keim has boldly endeavoured to father upon the same personage the authorship of the Gospel.

But Eusebius, as we have seen (see p. xxxii., note), has elsewhere quoted testimonies ('Chron.,' i.) from Irenæus that Papias was a hearer of the Apostle John, as well as of Polycarp, and also that Polycarp and himself suffered martyrdom in the same persecution. This can be made closely to approximate the year A.D. 155; and proves that this man, who lived to a great age, must have been during many years a contemporary of John, who is said repeatedly by Irenæus to have lived to the days of Trajan (A.D. 96—117). Therefore, whether John the presbyter be or be not identical with John the apostle, Papias must be allowed to have been the hearer of the latter, and a positive admission on his part that the Apocalypse was *Θεόπνευστος* and *ἀγίαστος*, is highly significant. This is more impressive when it is remembered that he was Bishop of Mierapolis, in the close neighbourhood of Laodicea.

Melito of Sardis (about A.D. 169), another of the seven Churches of Asia, is reported by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iv. 26) and by Jerome ('De Viris Ill.,' c. 24) to have written "one book concerning the devil, and one concerning the Apocalypse of John."

Justin Martyr's testimony is remarkably explicit. In the 'Dial. cum Trypho,' c. 81, written about A.D. 146, Justin expressly mentions by name the Apocalypse as "written by a certain man named John, one of the apostles of Christ." The quotation he gives is unmistakable reference to the millennium of the Revelation. This is the more weighty, because Justin never elsewhere alludes by name to any writer of the New Testament. "We conclude," says Dr. Davidson, "that before the middle of the second century, the opinion that John the presbyter was the writer had not originated."

Apollonius, Bishop of Ephesus (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.,' v. 18), who wrote between A.D. 170 and 180, not only affirms John's residence in Ephesus, but that John was the author of the Apocalypse.

The Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne, as preserved by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' v. 1), quotes from the Apocalypse as *ἡ γραφή*, giving it consequently a character of the highest authority and value.

Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 168), in 'Ad Autol.,' ii. 28, refers to the Apocalypse of John as a book recognized in Antioch, and quotes Rev. xii. 3.

Irenæus of Lyons (who wrote his great work A.D. 177—199), whose testimony to John's Gospel, and whose letter to Florinus, wherein he declares that he remembered Polycarp, have been already cited (p. xx.)—Irenæus was the successor of the aged martyr Pothinus, and was thus, by another link, related to the group of followers who knew the Apostle John, and was himself not only acquainted with the Apocalypse, but compared different copies of it, and commented on the difference of readings as to "the number of the beast," preferring 666 to 616, because it had in its favour the testimony (*τῶν κατ' ὄψιν τὸν Ἰωάννην ὁρακόντων*) "of those who had seen John face to face." This is preserved in the Greek of Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' v. 8) and in the Latin translation ('Adv. Hær.,' v. 30. 1). The very numerous quotations and references by Irenæus to the book as the work of the Apostle John, the beloved disciple, leave no doubt as to his impression of the authorship. In 'Adv. Hær.,' iv. 20. 11 he introduces a long passage from Rev. i. 12, etc., with "Johannes Domini discipulus in Apocalypsi . . . inquit," and in lib. v. 26. 1 this phrase is repeated when he quotes Rev. xvii. 12, etc. (cf. also lib. v. 30. 1).

The Muratorian Canon does without doubt admit its apostolic authorship: "Joannes enim in Apocalypsi licet septem ecclesiis scribat, tamen omnibus dicit." "Apocalypses etiam Joannis, et Petri, tantum recipimus, quam quidem ex nostris legi in ecclesia nolunt." Here the author of the fragment discriminates between the two Apocalypses.

The canon of the Old Latin Version of the New Testament contained the Apocalypse; and Tertullian, who used it, quotes almost every chapter of the book (see especially

'De Præscrip. Hær.,' 33, where he cites Rev. ii. 20; 'Adv. Marc.,' iii. 14, where he cites Rev. i. 16, as the word of the Apostle John in the Apocalypse).

For our present purpose it is not necessary to proceed further than to say that Clemens Alex. ('Strom.,' iii.; 'Pæd.,' ii. 12; vi. 13) and Origen ('Comm. on Matthew and John'), notwithstanding the latter's opposition to millenarianism, admitted its authenticity; that Hippolytus (A.D. 200) quoted it by name ('Ref. Omn. Hær.,' vii. 24), and is said, in the inscription on his statue, to have written a work upon it; that Methodius and Cyril of Alexandria use it, and Ephrem Syrus (though the Peschito Syriac translation did not contain the book) quotes from it as from any other part of the New Testament, and from a later Syriac translation existing in his day.

We are not, however, without adverse or negative testimonies from very high antiquity to its apostolic authorship. These are, however, of such a kind as to resemble, and did in fact initiate, the subjective criticism to which the book has been submitted in modern times.

(i.) Thus Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 28) informs us that Caius, a presbyter of Rome, who lived about the time of Irenæus, seems to refer the book to "Cerinthus, who, through apocalypses written as if by a great apostle speaking falsely, brings in tales of marvels shown to him as if by angels, affirming that after the resurrection comes an earthly kingdom of Christ," etc. But it may be reasonably argued that Caius does not necessarily refer to John's Apocalypse at all, and we learn from other sources (Theod., 'De Hær. Fabulis,' ii. 3) that Cerinthus did produce supposed revelations of the future carnal pleasures of a coming millennium. It is by no means probable that Caius did make this charge against the book. Alford, Davidson, and many others accept this early blunder. Hug, Westcott, and Dr. Lee think that on close inquiry the supposed innuendo of Caius (a strong ante-Montanist) is non-existent.

(ii.) The sect of the *Alogi* were the strenuous opponents of the Gospel and of the Apocalypse, together with the doctrine of the *ΑΙΩΡΟΣ*, and were opposed to the Montanism and chiliasm which prevailed at the close of the century. The reasons they urged were purely doctrinal, or based upon proved historical blunders. The *Marcionites* in the same way, from doctrinal prepossessions, refused to recognize either the Gospels of Mark or Matthew or any of the writings of John. There is no value in such negative evidence to the existence of the Apocalypse. The non-appearance of the Apocalypse in the 'Canon of Marcion' is no argument at all against its apostolicity; but there is one writer of far more formidable character, who, in a long argument, endeavours to disprove its authenticity, though he does not go so far as to discard the book.

(iii.) *Dionysius of Alexandria*, a pupil of Origen, and a firm believer in the allegorical method of interpreting Scripture, was a vehement opponent of a literal millennium, and, to strengthen his antagonism, endeavoured to show that no apostle could have written the Apocalypse. His arguments have been preserved, and are cited at great length by Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' vii. 24, 25). They cover much of the ground which modern criticism occupies in endeavouring to separate from the Apocalypse the Fourth Gospel, in whose apostolic authority he entirely believed. He disagreed with those who set it aside; he deduced no arguments from antiquity; he did not refer to the deficiency of external evidence; he did not reject it as the work of Cerinthus; nor did he object to it on the ground taken by the *Alogi*, because it might have deep meanings which he cannot fathom, and because it probably is the work of some holy and inspired writer; but he argued with acuteness that it could not be John the apostle and the son of Zebedee, because (a) the author of the Apocalypse gives his name, whereas the author of the Gospel and the First Epistle is silent about his name, and in the Second and Third Epistles simply calls himself "the elder." (b) He argued that there were many "Johns," but that this writer does not make manifest which; he does not call himself either "the brother of James" or "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He urged that "John Mark" could not have been the author, because he refused to join in the Asian ministry of Paul (that, by the way, is a very poor argument); but he added very doubtfully, "I think there was another of these Johns in Asia; and they say that there are two tombs in Ephesus, and that each of them is said to be that of a John." This is the solitary reason he gives for some unknown John being the author.

Dionysius, comparing the Gospel of John with the Epistles, shows how the prologue



corresponds with the opening words of the Epistles, and he enumerates terms, themes, and ideas common to them both; but he presses the point that the Apocalypse differs from them both in its syntax, style, and solecisms of expression, adding that while the phrases, "light," "life," "grace," "joy," etc., occur in the other works, they do not appear in this.

Now, Eusebius supplements the speculation of Dionysius, and resuscitates from one of "the two tombs" in Ephesus "the Presbyter John," supposed to be referred to by Papias, and as answering to the unknown John whom Dionysius hoped to find. Eusebius leaves the matter in a vague and uncertain condition. He classes the book among the *Homologoumena* ('Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 25), but shows that his doubts turn largely on purely internal and doctrinal grounds, and that it was open to grave question whether it was written by the presbyter (ibid., iii. 39). The general evidence of *antiquity* is therefore various and peculiarly strong in its affirmations that the author of the Apocalypse was John the apostle. A few writers, on one subjective ground or another, doubt and hesitate; but, after all, if it were not for the supposed discrepancy between the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse, not one shadow of doubt would rest upon its authenticity.

Kirchhofer says, 'Quellensammlung' (see Charteris on 'Canonicity,' J. J. Taylor, 'The Fourth Gospel,' p. 41), "Hardly one book of the New Testament has such a circle of historical testimonies marked by name on its behalf."

Many writers have assumed that the conclusion at which we have arrived touching the authorship of the Apocalypse is a powerful argument against the Johannine origin of the Fourth Gospel, and they have emphasized to the utmost the marks of difference between these two documents. Indeed, there is every kind of hypothesis held in order to explain the phenomena of the case.

(i.) There are those who refuse, with Keim, to admit the apostolic origin of either the one or the other, disputing the residence of St. John in Asia, and laying the blame of the tradition so widely diffused on the shoulders of Irenæus, who confounded, as Keim supposes, the two Johns.

(ii.) There are those who, like Lücke, Ewa'd, Lützelberger, Düsterdieck, De Wette, and Neander, regard the authorship of the Gospel to be certainly established, and partly on that very ground, echoing the early scepticism of Dionysius, assign the Apocalypse to some other John, either "the presbyter," or "John Mark," or some unknown "John the divine, or theologian."

(iii.) Bretschneider and the Tübingen criticism, represented by Baur and Zeller, gravitated to the strong assertion of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, its early date, the residence of its author in Ephesus, and other identifications of "John" with the fiery, impetuous, Jewish-Christian apostle. This apocalyptic form is supposed to reflect the first and earliest form of Christian teaching. Volkmar went further, and pressed the violently anti-Pauline theology of the Apocalypse, and pointed, with Renan, to the supposed proof that the writer, whoever he was, may have been endeavouring to denounce Paul and his work in the Churches of Asia under the pseudonym of "Balaam." Whether he were John the apostle or not, Volkmar holds that he endeavoured to shelter himself under the name and shadow of one of the original apostles.

These conclusions of the most modern reconstructive criticism have called great attention to the internal evidence either of the identity or irreconcilable divergence of the two documents. If the purpose, spirit, ideas, phraseology, and diction are veritably opposed, then the proof of the apostolic authorship, which we think is more than sufficient, may have the effect of weakening the evidence already accumulated for the Johannine origin of the Fourth Gospel. If, on the other hand, there are very numerous and subtle links of connection and resemblance between these documents; if the use of rare words and forms of expression in both, together with a practically identical Christology and a corresponding structure, can be clearly established; if the oppositions of style turn out to be balanced by a still larger number of interesting correspondences; if the supposed solecisms can be accounted for on rational grounds, and easy parallels found for them in classical Greek; if there be fundamental conceptions of the Person and kingdom of Christ which are in both actually identical and also peculiar to these writings; if the conviction is forced upon the mind that they must have proceeded from the same pen;—then it is obvious that the apostolic origin of the Apoca

lyse is one of the strongest arguments for the *Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel*.

The internal and external evidence already adduced for the former compels us, therefore, to examine the grounds of the supposed incompatibility of the single authorship. In drawing attention to the supposed differences or real differences of style, it is incumbent upon us to remember that the Gospel is a religious biography, the Apocalypse the record of a series of marvellous visions; that the Gospel is written in concise though limpid prose, and the Apocalypse is in structure and arrangement poetical; that the Gospel betrays, without quoting it, a close acquaintance with the synoptic narrative, and the Apocalypse a very intimate knowledge of the prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and the Psalms, but without once referring to them; that the Gospel is framed on the lines of the reflective and argumentative history, and that the Revelation proceeds on the lines of the apocalyptic literature which prevailed. Lücke, M ses Stuart, Dr. S. Davidson (in each of his 'Introductions to the New Testament'), Dr. William Lee (in the 'Speaker's Commentary'), have each presented, in very abundant fashion, long lists of discrepancies, some of the most striking and important of which must be passed under review. We therefore proceed to notice—

(b) *The phenomena of divergence and resemblance between the two documents.* (α) The grammatical and lexical differences. (β) The grammatical and lexical resemblances. (γ) The structure of the two books. (δ) The theological divergences and resemblances.

(α) *The grammatical and lexical differences.* (i.) It is stated that the Gospel is remarkably free from Hebraisms, but that the Apocalypse is charged with them; that the first is written in a fair approximation to classical Greek, whereas the latter reveals everywhere a strong Hebraistic or Aramaic colouring. Winer says that these Hebraisms are, throughout the New Testament, more conspicuous in the different and enlarged sense of words than in grammatical relations of words, although the most obvious illustrations are found in the substitution of the simple *kai* as representative of the Hebrew copulative (י) *vau*, in place of the numerous particles and conjunctions with which classical Greek abounds; also of *ōs* as possibly representing the Hebrew prefix א, or יא. The discourses of our Lord and the visions of the seer would certainly further such a contrast in the construction of the Greek sentences. Yet it must be remembered that in the Gospel, where intense feeling seems to make each utterance a separate heart-throb (ch. xv., xvii.), and each change in the scene and each successive event a separate thing of great and unparalleled interest, as in ch. xx., the evangelist dispenses with particles, and moves on from step to step without their aid. It is said that John uses πάντοτε and πόποτε and καθώς in the Gospel, but that they are not found in the Apocalypse; but the use of the first two of these common words occurs very rarely in the New Testament, and their absence proves nothing, while the absence of καθώς in the Apocalypse is no proof of Hebraism, because the particle occurs in portions of the New Testament that are specially Hebraistic.

It is certain that the Apocalypse uses Hebrew words like "Abaddon" (Rev. ix. 11), "Amen," "Hallelujah" (Rev. xix. 1, 3, 4, 6); but then it must not be forgotten that the Gospel alone in the New Testament also makes use of the "Amen, amen," when calling special attention to the words which follow; and records the Jewish burst of praise, ὡσαννὰ (ch. xii. 13), and in ch. i. 41 and iv. 25 is the one writing which transliterates into Greek the Hebrew מֵעוֹלָם (explained by the writer as equal to Χριστός); gives the Hebrew form of the tribunal before which Christ was brought as Γαββαθ (see ch. xix. 13); and, together with Matthew and Mark, speaks of Γολγοθᾶ (ch. xix. 17); and refers to the μύσση (ch. vi. 31) as in Rev. ii. 17; records the Galilean form, βαββουή, in ch. xx. 16; and in a whole group of passages, after giving the Hebrew or Aramaic form, furnishes the translation into Greek. It is impossible to overlook, in the Apocalypse, the Hebrew root of many of the representations; e.g. the imagery of the temple furnishes the scenery of ch. i.—iii., "the seven golden lamps," "the hidden manna," and "the new name on the white stone." The history of Israel, moreover, gives meaning to the reference to the "Root and Offspring of David," also to the quotation from Ps. ii., references to the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," to the "twelve tribes of Israel," and to "the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven."

But this peculiarity is equally conspicuous in the Gospel. We have (p. xlii.)

endeavoured to show that none but a Hebrew, a Palestinian Jew, could have written the Gospel, so that the presence of Hebrew ideas in the Apocalypse creates a bond of union between the two documents rather than the reverse. Let the following points be noticed: *γενεσθαι θανάτου*, in ch. viii. 52, and *σημεία καὶ τέρατα*, ch. iv. 48; *σφραγίσαι* in the sense of ratifying and approving (ch. iii. 33); *δ' ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου* (ch. xii. 31; xvi. 11, etc.). The Apocalypse commences with a Christophany, corresponding with the theophanies of Isa. vi. and Ezek. i. and x., and proceeds throughout its visions to vindicate the stupendous claims of the Lord who liveth and was dead, until the final victory of the Lamb is consummated in a purified city, of which the Lord Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple and the Light. But the Gospel begins in eternity, and makes the eternal (*Ἀόγος*) "Word" the sublime background for all the manifestation in the flesh. Among the earliest claims which the Gospel makes for the incarnate God is this—he is the Lamb of God taking away sin, the link between heaven and earth, the Bridegroom of the Church; One greater than the temple, he promises to erect an eternal temple should the first be destroyed. The Lamb of the Apocalypse, through endless conflict with evil, first from the Jews, then from the world, then from the centralized world-power, passes to his "Hallelujah," and wipes away tears from off all faces. In the Gospel, the great powers elsewhere seen in Apocalyptic vision come face to face with the historic Christ; through warfare and death he gains a real victory over priest and procurator, betrayer and murderer, and proceeds to wipe away tears from off all faces, to conquer death and Hades, and to confer an eternal life. The Hebraism of both documents is conspicuous, but that of the one is not more abundant than is that of the other. While the Gospel opens the kingdom of God to all believers, and speaks of "the other sheep," and the time when "neither in Gerizim nor yet in Jerusalem shall men worship the Father," the same grand universalism pervades the Apocalypse, which sees the great multitude gathered out of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue, which no man can number, and admits all the (*ἔθνη*) nations into the eternal light of the new and heavenly Jerusalem. This Judaism, or Hebraism, in the two documents finds such a strong and coincident expression, that, so far from separating the authorship, it does much to establish identity of origin.

(ii.) The following grammatical peculiarities of the Apocalypse deserve close observation.

(a) *Cases of false opposition.* Some of the most obvious ones are derived from our not perceiving that the clause thus charged is a parenthetical one. Rev. i. 5, 'Ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς, etc., "From Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness." In the previous verse a false regimen is said to be signal evidence that the apocalypticist defied all grammatical rules: 'Ἀπὸ ὃ ὄν καὶ ὃ ἦν καὶ ὃ ἐρχόμενος. This cannot prove that the writer does not know the syntax of the preposition *ἀπὸ*, seeing that thirty places occur in which he uses it with perfect correctness. The explanation of the peculiarity is that he is, in this place, merely translating the incommunicable name of "Jehovah" into Greek, and regarding the phrase as one indeclinable noun. The *ἡ λέγουσα* of Rev. ii. 20, which is the text preferred by the R.T., is clearly a relative clause, the nominative preferred in virtue of the finite verbs which follow. Similar peculiarities are found in Plato's 'Euthyphro,' p. 32 (see Winer, 671, Eng. trans.); see also Rev. v. 11, etc., where the construction is peculiar in a like respect. But so far from its being impossible Greek, examples are given from Plato, Thucydides, Achilles Tat., and others.

There are curious combinations of nominatives and accusatives in Rev. iv. 2—4; xiv. 14; vii. 9; following *εἶδον καὶ ἰδοὺ*; but there is this peculiarity, that the nominatives follow the *ἰδοὺ*, and the accusatives come more under the power of the preceding *εἶδον*. The (Rev. viii. 8, 9) *τὰ ἔχοντα ψυχάς*, introduced to discriminate *κτίσματα*, "which have life," from those which have it not, becomes a parenthetical sentence (cf. here Jas. iii. 8).

Anomalies of gender and number are to be explained by the strong poetic temperament which tends to give masculine or feminine characteristics to the neuter noun. Rev. ii. 27, where *ἐθνη* are referred to as *αὐτοὺς*; but precisely the same thing is seen in Matt. xxviii. 19; Gal. iv. 19; *δυνάμει* are referred to as *ἄξιόν* in Rev. xix. 14, *στρατεύματα* are *ἐνδεδυμένοι*. The peculiarity is by no means solecistic; it is found in the Gospel and in numerous Greek writers. The critics have enumerated sundry

solitary peculiarities of the Apocalypse, which are good enough Greek, which proves nothing as to the non-identity of the authorship with the Fourth Gospel. All Paul's Epistles contain numerous *ἑπαξ λεγόμενα*.

(b) *Peculiar use of words.* Ewald urged that John used compound words in his Gospel, but that they are *not* used in the Apocalypse. Moses Stuart (p. 321) enumerates twenty-six compound verbs which occur in *both* books—twenty or more peculiar to the Apocalypse, and ten or twelve to the Gospel and Epistle. Objectors have pressed the fact that “such favourite words of the fourth evangelist as *θεάομαι* and *θεωρέω* are displaced, and that we find in the Apocalypse *ὀράω* and *βλέπω*.” The statement is misleading. Wherever John uses *θεάομαι* in the Gospel, he means by it a steady and continuous contemplation—a verbal idea singularly inappropriate to the visions of the seer. Moreover, both the Gospel and the Apocalypse each make use of *βλέπω* sixteen times. The *εἶδον*, so often used in the Apocalypse, frequently occurs in the Gospel.

Lücke speaks of the absence from the Apocalypse of the “genitive absolute,” a syntactical form common to the Gospel. This is partially true; but Rev. xvii. 8 can hardly be explained on another principle, and let it be noticed that though there are fifteen cases of this construction in the Gospel, there are none in the Epistle.

Much emphasis has been laid on the absence of certain words which are especially prominent in the Fourth Gospel, such as *κόσμος*, *φῶς*, *σκοτία*, and *ζωὴ αἰώνιος* used in a moral sense. The nature of the two compositions is sufficient to explain the partial truth of this statement; but *φῶς* does occur in Rev. xviii. 23; xxi. 23, 24; xxii. 5; and *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, which is used by all New Testament writers, is in John's Gospel interchanged with *ζωή* without the adjective; and *ζωή* does occur in the Apocalypse sixteen times.

The presence of words in the Apocalypse not found in the Gospel has also been urged. One of those which are especially pressed is *οἰκουμένη*. This word occurs in Matthew *once*; in Luke's writings, *eight* times; in Hebrews, *twice*; and three times only in the Apocalypse—as often, in fact, as the word *κόσμος* occurs, the absence of which is commented on. We find that *παντοκράτωρ* occurs nine times in association with *Κύριος Θεός*. The term is used also by St. Paul (2 Cor. vi. 18), and in certain of St. Paul's writings we find peculiar expressions for the Deity, not occurring elsewhere (1 Tim. i. 17).

Other peculiarities of grammar and lexical usage may be easily cited. These are the most impressive, and they amount, in themselves, to a very feeble proof of diversity of authorship. In some instances, as we have seen, the conclusion is in favour of identity rather than divergence. We will now proceed.

(β) *The grammatical and lexical resemblances* observable in the two documents. One great idea is expressed by the noun *μαρτυρία* and the verb *μαρτυρέω*, in the sense of public testimony concerning the Lord Christ—public profession of belief in him. This is one of the key-words of the Gospel, where the verb occurs thirty-seven times, and in the Epistles twelve times; moreover, the noun is used twenty times in the Gospel and Epistles. They are sparingly used in other books—once in Matthew, eight or nine times in all the Pauline Epistles, more frequently in Acts (twelve times) and the Epistle to the Hebrews, but in a different sense, while in the Apocalypse we find the verb used in the same sense four times and the noun nine times. *Νικᾶν*, in the sense of overcoming the evil of the world, occurs in very remarkable force in ch. xvi. 33, and six times in the Epistle, and, in precisely the same sense, seventeen times in the Apocalypse. No New Testament writer except the author of the Gospel and the Apocalypse uses the word *ὄψις* in the sense of human visage, or in any sense (ch. vii. 24; xi. 44; Rev. i. 16). *Τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* is a phrase peculiar to the author of the Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse. It occurs seven times in the Gospel, once in the Epistles, and four times in the Apocalypse; *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολὰς* occurs twice in the Gospel, five times in the Epistle, and twice in the Apocalypse, and only once beside in all the New Testament. The tabernacling (*σκηνοῦν*) of the Logos with men is found in ch. i. 14, and the same idea is given in the same word in Rev. vii. 15; xii. 12; xiii. 6; xxi. 3; and nowhere else. The word *σφάττειν* occurs in 1 John iii. 12, and seven times in the Apocalypse; *περιπατεῖν μετὰ τινος* (ch. vi. 66; Rev. iii. 4). The use of *σφραγίζειν*, in the sense of confirming, is seen in ch. iii. 33 and Rev. vii. *Ἐβραῖστὶ* is found three times in the Gospel, twice in the Apocalypse, and nowhere else. *Δαλεῖν μετὰ τινος* occurs three times in the Gospel, six

times in the Apocalypse, and only once beside in the New Testament. *Παῖς* occurs eight times in the Gospel, once in the Apocalypse (in the unusual sense of taking an animal), and only three times in all the New Testament beside. *Κόρις ἐν οἶδᾳ* occurs three times in ch. xxi. and in Rev. vii. 14. While certain common words like *μετάνοια*, *γένηται*, never occur in any of the Johannine writings, *φωτίζω*, *δόξα*, *φαίω*, frequently occur in all three. *Πίστις*, a word occurring some three hundred and forty times in the New Testament, is absent from the Gospel, and nearly absent from the Epistles and Apocalypse, only occurring five times in all. The most striking phrases and forms of thought-imagery are common to the Gospel and Apocalypse; e.g. the idea of the Lord Jesus Christ as "a Lamb," in ch. i. 29 (under the form *ἀμνός*), and in the Apocalypse it occurs twenty-five times under the form *ἀρνίον*. The representation of the Christ as Bridegroom of the Church (ch. iii. 29) reappears in Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2. The "water of life" is an idea that occurs twice in the Gospel and twice in the Apocalypse. The frequent use of *μετὰ ταῦτα* should be noted (ch. iii. 22; v. 1, 14; vi. 1; vii. 1; xix. 38; xxi. 1; Rev. iv. 1; vii. 1 (T.R.), 9; xv. 5; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xx. 3). The most remarkable identity of phrase (however it may be accounted for) is in the Greek translation of Zech. xii. 10, where *קָרַק* is rendered in ch. xix. 34—37 (see note) by *ἐξενέ- νησαν* rather than *δυσὲς καταρχήσαντο* of the LXX. The same translation, as well as the same citation, occurs again in Rev. i. 7. The other Greek translations and Justin Martyr followed the same text, but they were prepared after St. John. The only explanation is that the writers of the two passages were deeply impressed with the piercing of the side of Jesus, its fulfilment of prophecy, and they translated Zechariah's text in the same way, and in this differed from the LXX.

These peculiarities of diction, and similarities, might be greatly argued, as may be seen in Lücke, Moses Stuart, Davidson, and Dr. Lee. They leave upon our minds a powerful impression that whosoever wrote the one book had, undoubtedly, much to do with the other also. The supposed discrepancies of diction are much reduced on close examination, and the correspondences are more striking than the discrepancies. One method of refuting or evading the force of these similarities is to suppose that the author of the Gospel in post-apostolic times was acquainted with the Apocalypse and purposely adopted them. The necessity for such a refutation goes far towards a repudiation of the argument based upon the dissimilarity.

(γ) *The structure of the two books.* So far as the style and structure are concerned, *prima facie*, the contrast is obvious. In the Gospel we have the simple, apparently artless, and even grammatico-structureless composition. A winning fluency pervades it, and the reader blends without effort the events with the consequent discourses. Moreover, as some of these commence *in mediis rebus*, and close in the midst of a conversation without dramatic introduction or end, an incautious reader might suspect an utter absence of plan or arrangement. Apparently no effort is made to produce an impression upon the reader. Utterances of the Lord Jesus Christ, of transcendent importance, are not infrequently recorded without comment, and even the effect upon their first hearers is conveyed with surpassing reticence. Very few signs occur of great or vivid imagination on the part of the writer; and no bursts of eloquence, no dazzling scenes corresponding with the synoptic narrative of the Transfiguration, are recorded. No attempt is made to aggravate the tragedy of the Passion; a studied omission of certain memorable scenes, which might have been dressed in apocalyptic splendour, occurs to all students. But, on the other hand, the Revelation of St. John is so arranged as to form a series of connected visions, with growing intensity of suggestion, and climactic force of grouping. After the opening vision, *seven* letters are addressed to the *seven* Churches by the living Lord. Then follows the gorgeous vision of the throne of God and of the book with the *seven* seals. The opening of six of these seals is followed by a prophetic symbol; but before the seventh is opened a subordinate act is introduced. The *four* angels who have power to injure land and sea are arrested by "another angel," who would secure the safety of twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel; and after this the seer beholds an innumerable company of every age, kingdom, nation, who stand before the Lamb, and sing a new song. Then, when the seventh seal is opened, fresh delay intervenes, for that action involves the delivery of trumpet-voices by *seven* angels. The first four trumpet-blasts, like the effect of the opening of the first four *seals*, produce certain specified results.

The fifth trumpet is followed by three successive *woes*, which are described in great detail. The sixth and seventh trumpets declare, after numerous preparations and conflicts, that the kingdom of the world has begun to be the eternal kingdom of God and his Christ, and that the time for judging the dead has come. Then the temple of God is seen, and numerous episodes follow, amongst them the visions of the dragon and of the great *θnplov*, with (R.T.) ten horns and seven heads, and ten crowns upon the horns. Then the second great *θnplov*, ascending from the earth, has the horns of a "lamb," and is a false prophet. The power of this "beast" and "false prophet" prevail for a while, when several consoling visions follow, bearing on the blessedness of the dead and the harvest of the world. This is again followed by seven last plagues, which are to succeed the outpouring of the seven vials full of the wrath of God; the first four again are discriminated from the last three vials, and throughout, the pouring out of the vials corresponds with the sounding of the previous trumpets. The effects produced on Euphrates, and on the fortunes of the beast, are enlarged and associated with the great whore Babylon, who sits upon the beast in gorgeous apparel. The fall of Babylon is described in awful and dramatic form. The war made by Babylon upon the Lamb leads to her doom; but, before this occurs, the people of God are commanded to go forth of her. After the disappearance of Babylon, the Logos of God, a Conqueror in heaven, with his glorious army of the saved, overthrows all his enemies, and he "lives and reigns a thousand years," during which "the souls of the martyrs live again." After a while Satan is let loose for a season; then is revealed the world-power in its force, and the great battle takes place between the two powers, ending in the destruction and torment of the devil, the beast, and the false prophet, to all eternity. Meanwhile the new Jerusalem, the holy city, comes down out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and all is made new. These sublime descriptions have been for eighteen hundred years the symbolism and material to which the eye of the Church has turned for its anticipations of the final blessedness of the redeemed from among men.

This elaborate structure; this subtle and complicated imagery; this repeated suspense of veritable crisis, the cyclical nature of visions, conflicts, and victories, the reappearance and reutterance of the ideas which have been first of all presented in less detail; this passing from heaven through earth to heaven again, with episodes of superlative magnificence and measured grandeur, which receive further exposition as the mighty drama unfolds itself;—all this suggests, at first perusal, a mode of treatment singularly unlike the structure, method, and style of the Fourth Gospel. Yet it must be at the same time granted that there are some resemblances of a very remarkable kind which may modify the impression of great dissimilarity. *E.g.* the structure of the Gospel is not a merely spontaneous unfolding of events taken at random. The numbers *seven*, *three*, and *ten* play almost as marvellous a part in the Gospel as in the Revelation.

Seven great miracles are wrought by our Lord before his Passion; and after his resurrection three specially recorded appearances to his apostles, the last accompanied by a significant miracle. These are related with ever-gathering suggestiveness. (i.) First of all he asserts his victory over the material of nature, and exhibits his prerogatives of creation. (ii.) This is followed by his healing of the nobleman's son, and his power over the widespread sorrow which comes from the poisonous alien force of fever taking possession of humanity. (iii.) Then in his miracle at the pool of Bethesda he indicates his power to restore lacking force and energy to the impotent. (iv.) This is followed by the miraculous supply of food to the starving multitude, or his capacity to satisfy all the genuine desires of humanity. (v.) His superiority to the forces, as well as his mastery of the matter, of the universe, in walking upon and hushing the stormy sea. (vi.) In his healing of the man born blind, he met the radical defect of human nature, and opened a new world to the unseeing eye. (vii.) And in the raising of Lazarus, he demonstrated his power to encounter and overcome the last great enemy of the human race. This comprehensive enumeration of the great power of Jesus, which, with augmenting interest, pursues its powerful argument through the mystical septenary series, gives one point of structural relation with the Apocalypse. Furthermore, a suspense which throughout delays the crisis and postpones the victory of Christ, in the Apocalypse, until the city of God comes down out of heaven, appears in the Gospel. Thus the "hour" of the Lord's highest manifestation, not of world-wide victory, but supreme self-devotion to the interests of the world, to humanity as such, pervades the Gospel.

It is almost always suggested as near, but is not yet come. Thus before the first miracle (ch. ii. 4) the Lord tells his mother she must wait for the full satisfaction he will eventually give to human need. In ch. iv. 21, 23 he foretells the approach of an hour of transcendent interest to the true worshipper; and in ch. v. 25, 28 he waits and causes his hearers to wait for the full manifestation of his judgment and power. In ch. vii. 30 and ch. viii. 20 twice the Lord escapes from the malice which was bursting for expression, because his "hour was not yet come." In ch. xii. 27 this hour of his sacrifice seems to have been reached, and yet there is the wondrous delay of the valedictory discourse, in which the supreme Teacher and Victim, in larger sweep of thought and infinitely bolder utterance than does the Socrates of the 'Phædo,' discourses of "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Arising to go from the upper chamber to the garden, once more he lifts his voice with prophetic ardour and unfathomable depth of thought, and concludes with words which are of inimitable force, revealing his love, his satisfaction with the faith of the eleven, and his renewed prediction of sorrow, calamity, and desertion. The seal is loosed, the trumpet has sounded, the vial is poured, and yet before the great woes are uttered and the tragedy begins there comes the interlude of the intercessory prayer. The same mysterious accumulation of climacteric sorrows reaches its highest expression when he lays down his life that he may take it again. Much of the same kind of overlapping of interest pervades every step taken until we reach the confession of Thomas.

The Gospel is composed, as the Revelation is, upon a somewhat similar plan. In both we have (i.) prologue; (ii.) introductory ministry, giving specimens of all his powers and functions; (iii.) active conflict with the world of Judaism, and all the power of the prince of this world; (iv.) creation of the inner sanctuary, where love and communion can go on undisturbed between himself and his own disciples, and then between him and them united and the eternal Father; (v.) the great representative of the world-power really baffled and overcome by the blood he was by his own mingled passions forced on to shed; (vi.) the uplifting of the veil which hides the eternal world, in the revelations of the glorified Lord; (vii.) epilogue, revealing the triumph of his rule to the end of the world. There is the most complicated structure involved in the selection of the materials and their arrangement. The epilogue points back to the prologue, and epilogue and prologue are illustrated by the intervening chapters. The Fourth Gospel is not an invertebrate and chance collection of works and words. Every event recorded is to some extent prepared for in the prologue and complemented in the epilogue; e.g. on behalf of the Logos the creative power is claimed. The evangelist's ideas on this subject are affirmed by the miracle on the water and on the Sea of Galilee. The Logos is asserted to be the origin of "life," and we find that the body of the narrative leads continually to the demonstration that Christ is the Life-giver, and that he will and does rise from the dead. He is "the Light," and with what care does the Gospel record the proof that Christ claims to be "the Light of the world"! The prologue reveals the activity of the Logos in the old creation and in the theocracy; the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. This is confirmed by a succession of dealings on his part with the temple, with the Sanhedrin, with the chosen teachers of the people, with Samaritan claims, with the sect of the Pharisees, with pseudo-historical prejudices, with legal quibbles, with sabbatic pride, with misapprehended revelation, and the like. The philosopheme of ch. i. 14 is, without doubt, the theme of every chapter, though it is never once quoted. It rises over the Gospel just as the great vision of him that liveth and was dead dominates the Apocalypse. To the specific details of the structure of the Gospel it is not necessary in this place to refer more minutely (see plan of the Gospel, sect. X.). It is sufficiently patent to make the structural character of the Apocalypse no bar to community of origin. Nay, more, the two documents are in the matter of structure so closely allied as to lead many competent critics to hold that the two books must have proceeded from the same pen.

(3) *The theology of the Apocalypse, so far as it bears upon the authorship of the Fourth Gospel.* Even Baur and Volkmar admit a certain correspondence in the type of doctrine to be found in the two books, and differences of style or method of presentation being allowed, cannot maintain that they spring from a different root. The more the matter is weighed the more abundant becomes the evidence of similarity. Indeed, there are no two books of the New Testament which are more closely allied in their

fundamental ideas of the Godhead, of the rank in the universe of the Son of God, of the Personality of the Spirit, of the ground and method of redemption, and the transcendently important and significant teaching with reference to obedience and submission of man to the commandments and will of the Supreme. Greater difference is perceptible with reference to the *parousia*, and the doctrine of the last things; and yet even here the advocates of the early date of the Apocalypse<sup>1</sup> who believe that the fall of Jerusalem, with all its tremendous consequences to the Church of God, largely fill up the Apocalypse and are symbolically portrayed in its visions, are ready to admit that the Gospel is but a sublimated Apocalypse. Without looking for or finding, however, any later stage of Johannine doctrine, as Ritzsch and Weiss and Sears ('Heart of Christ') have done, Gebhart undertakes to prove, "by a comparison of their teaching, that what Strauss calls 'the notorious, fantastical Judaizing-Zelotic' author of the Apocalypse, and the lauded final reconciler of all the contrarieties of the first and of half the second centuries—the author of the Fourth Gospel—are one and the same apostolic personality."

We must remember that the conditions under which truth was apprehended by the author of each book were profoundly different. In the one case a writer professing to be an eye-witness is reflecting on the past; in the other he is anticipating the future. In the one book we have the historical realization of One who was believed to be God manifest in the flesh—a human being, who laid down his life that he might take it again, who passes through the stages of trial, suffering, and death, to the occupation of a position in two worlds, at home and yet capable of exercising supremacy in both; in the other book the writer surveys the future, and realizes the conflict of this Divine Personality with evil in all its forms of manifestation. In the one book the writer is reflective, utters large and comprehensive truths in a form approaching the dogmatic and propositional. In the other the same truths are represented in glowing imagery and brilliant picture. In the one book he writes "in the understanding," with the view of rationalizing and soothing the thoughts of men with great realities and the material of faith. In the other he writes "in the Spirit," with the imagery of the Hebrew prophet. Paul may have had similar visions, but he could not utter them; John was able to make his readers feel what he felt, and see what he saw, and hear what he heard, and handle what he handled, when he was caught up into Paradise—into the highest heaven. Just as a biographer with penetrative insight, he was able to seize and record more than any other apostle the open secrets of the heart of Jesus, so that same man, when permitted to see into the present glory of the Divine Lord, was also qualified to see more and say more than any other apocalyptic writer of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

This position, however, the reader can only decide for himself; and illustration and comparison are necessary under some of the principal groups and classes of doctrine.

(i.) Let us commence with some of the fundamental doctrines of these books with reference to the *Godhead*.

(a) One of the most conspicuous ideas of the Gospel is that *God is a Spirit* (ch. iv. 24); and the teaching with which this is associated is that the old local sanctuaries will pass away, that spiritual and true worship will be universal, alike the explanation of the past dealings and the prophecy of the future dealings of God with men. How does this same truth appear in the Apocalypse? In the repeated and continuous assurance that true believers are the veritable priesthood (Rev. i. 6; v. 10); that the faithful are personally as sacred in themselves as pillars in the temple (Rev. iii. 12); that "prayers of saints" are the "incense" that perfumes it (Rev. v. 8; viii. 3); that the new Jerusalem builds itself down out of heaven, including within its walls the world itself; that its door is "open;" that the gates are never closed, and the "seven spirits" (or sevenfold spiritual energy of God himself) go forth into the whole earth; and that the nations of the saved walk in the light of it. Moreover, the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof.

(b) God is "life," "love," and "light." These are the persistent ideas of the Gospel and Epistle. "Life" (ch. i. 4; v. 26; vi. 57; 1 John v. 20, "This is the true God, and eternal life"). "Love" (ch. iii. 16; 1 John iv. 8, 16). "Light" (ch. i. 4; 1 John i.

<sup>1</sup> See Gebhart, 'Doctrine of the Apocalypse,' Eng. trans., pp. 305—424.



5). These statements are not categorically made in the Apocalypse; but how steadily are they taught! The very phrase, "living God," is found in Rev. vii. 2 (cf. xv. 7; iv. 9, 10; x. 6). God is the Life-giver, and "he who *liveth* for ever and ever." He is the Light of the city of God, its Sun, its Glory. Because of his presence "there is no night there," and "because the Lord God giveth them light." The love of God to his own servants, to those who are saved, is reiterated throughout the visions in every kind of representation; even when the prophet is detailing the severity of the Divine judgments, he is represented as the Father of the Lamb; and the numerous references to his anger and wrath are always the manifestation of such emotions towards the enemies, persecutors of his Church. No passages in the entire Scripture are more radiant than those which portray the love of God to his own children (Rev. vii. 2, 3, 15—17; xxi. 3, 4, 6, 7).

(c) Whereas the First Epistle (i. 9) declares God to be "faithful and just," in ch. xvii. 11, 25 our Lord addresses God as "the holy and righteous Father." The Apocalypse reiterates the same idea, not only with its "thrice-holy cry" (Rev. iv. 8), but in most abundant phrase in Rev. xv. 3; xvi. 5, 7; xxi. 5. Similar comparisons may be made in proof of the common doctrine concerning the wisdom and truthfulness of God.

(d) The internal relations of the Godhead are more abundantly set forth in the Gospel than in any other part of the Scripture. It is there that the "Logos" is spoken of as personally present with and one with God; that the "Only Begotten of the Father" is represented as being in the bosom of the Father, as having a "glory with the Father before the world was." The self-conscious and God-conscious Christ speaks of himself as having "come down from heaven," as being "in heaven" while yet on earth,<sup>1</sup> and he admits a degree of reverence, homage, and praise which apostles and prophets and angels of God are studiously represented as disclaiming for themselves. Let these and other passages be compared with 1 John i. 1—4, where the Christ is called "the Word of life," and "that eternal life which was with the Father, and has been manifested unto us," and the high and probable ascription to Jesus Christ of the great title, "This is the true God, and eternal Life." There is, on the other hand, no book of the New Testament which so emphatically adopts this great term in its fulness, viz. "the Logos of God," for the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. xix. 13). Nor can we doubt that "the Word of God" to which the author of the Apocalypse bore record (i. 2) is the same grand theme which identifies its author with the author of the Gospel and First Epistle (see also Rev. i. 9; cf. vi. 9; xx. 4). There are passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews which closely approach, but are by no means so explicit (Heb. iv. 12—14; see also 1 Cor. x. 9, taken in connection with Philo's reference of the object of this temptation as the *λόγος*).

There is much to lead to the same conclusion, because the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the author of the Gospel identifies with the *ΛΟΓΟΣ ΣΑΡΕ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ*, the author of the Apocalypse calls the *Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ* (Rev. xix. 13). Jesus Christ, moreover, is placed by the latter as one of the integral elements whose relations with each other constitute the Godhead (Rev. i. 4—8), and he receives at his hands the highest designations that human language could frame to denote his superlative dignity. He is "Alpha and Omega," the "Beginning and the End," "the Holy and True," "the Amen," "he that is alive for evermore," "the *Ἀρχή* of the creation of God," i.e. "the Primal Source of the creation."

The evangelist in numerous places represents our Lord as claiming for the Divine Personality manifested in his humanity as the Son, the Son of God, precisely the same honours and functions as those of the Father (ch. v. 17—26; viii. 19; x. 15; xvii. 1; cf. 1 John ii. 23). In the same way the author of the Apocalypse represents the Lamb of God as receiving identical ascriptions of praise with those of God himself, or of him who liveth for ever and ever (Rev. vi. 16; xii. 10; xiv. 4; xxi. 22; v. 13; vii. 10). It is worthy of much attention that the writer of the Gospel records the great words, "I and the Father are one," and that "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father;" and the writer of the Apocalypse represents angels and men alike paying this supreme homage (Rev. iv. 8—11; cf. v. 12, 13) to the Father and to the Lamb.

<sup>1</sup> Though doubt is thrown upon this text by some modern editors (see Exposition, ch. iii.).

(e) Further peculiarities, bearing on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, are found in both Gospel and Apocalypse.

(1) Important ideas, touching the intimate blending of the human life with the heavenly glory of the Lord, occur in both documents. The consciousness of Christ is revealed in the Gospel, that though *in the flesh* (seeing he had come from God), he was "going to God;" that he had "come forth from the Father, and was going to the Father." His death was to be the highest manifestation of the Father's glory, and is followed by such a radical change, that resurrection and ascension are spoken of as one grand datum of the *eternal* life which was *in* him. The Son of man will ascend to where he was before. Mary of Magdala is not to touch him with mere human hands. In his ascension he will stand in such spiritual relations with his people that they shall touch him by other faculties than those of physical sense. The "descending" and "ascending" in ch. iii. 13; vi. 62; viii. 14, are the two great moments of the entire manifestation, between which the life is lived in such a way as to render these terms entirely applicable to the manner of his coming into and leaving the world. How wonderfully does the Apocalypse dwell in the same region of thought! In Rev. xii. 1—6 the man-child is to rule all nations with the rod, and is caught up to God upon his throne.

(2) References to the accompaniments of his death. The Fourth Gospel refers to the piercing of Jesus by the Roman's spear. This is treated both in the Gospel and Apocalypse as fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy. There is no other New Testament reference to the prophecy (cf. ch. xix. 32—37 with Rev. i. 7). In like manner, the entire representation of the career of the two witnesses, and the joy of the world at their death (Rev. xi. 9), corresponds with the joy of the world at the Lord's death (ch. xvi. 20); and the three days and a half of the two witnesses correspond with the three days of the resurrection of the spiritual temple in ch. ii. 18—20. A whole group of phrases descriptive of the resurrection and subsequent activity of the witnesses, their ascension, etc. (Rev. xi. 12), corresponds with those used by the evangelist to describe the death, resurrection-activity, and uplifting of Jesus; while the substance of the Apocalyptic vision is irradiated by the Divine presence of him who is alive, but "became dead," and "is alive for evermore."

(3) The identification of the Logos with the Messiah. The evangelist and apocalypticist both found their notions of the Christ rationalized by the Old Testament doctrine of the Logos. The Gospel never loses sight of the fact that he who was in the beginning with God (his life, light, and energy) was not only the Son of God, but the Hebrew *Messiah*; and in ch. xx. 31 the evangelist, pointing back to the doctrine of the prologue, shows that this was his reason for writing the Gospel. Throughout the latter we find the characteristics of both Messiah and Logos continually attributed to *Jesus*. The words of Jesus reflect throughout this double consciousness, and John's report of them cannot be unhistorical. The same kind of remark is not infrequently found in the synoptics. These great utterances go far beyond the current Messianic idea, which was corrected and ennobled by them. Thus Nathanael, John the Baptist, and some of the most intimate circle of our Lord's friends, such as Philip, Martha, and John himself, were conscious of this sublime blending of two thoughts, far enough apart in popular faith. Now, the evangelist notices that the Christ had his foothold on the earth, belonged to the tribe of Judah, of the seed of David (ch. vii. 42 and notes), and answers to certain noble expectations of a prophet (ch. iv. 19, 29, 44) who would teach them all things, solving difficult problems. In all these wonderful respects the Apocalypse is most explicit. "Jesus Christ" occurs at the beginning and ending of the Apocalypse, as in ch. i. 17 and xxii. 21, and frequently in the First Epistle. The Lion of the tribe of Judah opens the book fastened with the seven seals (Rev. v. 5; xxii. 16). Jesus describes himself as "Son of God" (Rev. ii. 18), having been so styled eight times in the Gospel. Throughout both documents, the Divine-human Personality, Jesus Christ, receives the predicates and activities of both Messiah and Logos.

(4) One extraordinary peculiarity wherewith, in the highest majesty of his self-dependent Divinity, the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of his inferior rank to the Father. This has often been a crux to theologians in dealing with the Fourth Gospel. Throughout it the Lord speaks of God as "my Father;" and even in ch. xx. 17, "My God"—an expression which throws light upon such expressions as, "My Father is greater than

I;” “I do always those things which please him,” etc. Now, these remarkable words correspond with the opening words of Rev. i. 1, and with the use in Rev. iii. 12 of the words, “My God,” thrice repeated. These two books combine the boldest utterances touching the Divinity of our Lord with a recognition of the subordination of the Son, and of the Person of the Lord in respect of his eternal derivation and his humiliation in the flesh.

Great prerogatives are assigned to the Messiah-Logos of the Gospel, and to the great central Personality of the Apocalypse, which correspond in a remarkable way. Thus Christ claims the judgment of the world, because he is “Son of man,” and “the Son” (ch. v. 30). In Rev. xix. 2, 11 the judgment of the world is attributed to him. Compare the two-edged sword going out of his mouth, with the power of judgment claimed (ch. v. 22—27; xii. 48). Jesus, as Christ, knew what was in man; so in Rev. ii. 23, “he searcheth the hearts and reins.” The feeding of the flock, etc., in Rev. vii. 17 is imaged in the parable of the good Shepherd (ch. x.; cf. ch. iv. 10—14). We cannot expect to find in the Gospel, recording the earthly humiliation of the eternal Logos, which was his highest glory, the peculiar functions of the triumphant Christ, who has become indeed “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” “the Lamb in the midst of the throne;” but we may expect to find that the way is prepared for this great glory—for the reassumption *in* and with his humanity of “the glory he had with the Father before all worlds” (when, as St. Paul expressed it, Christ *Jesus* received the Name which is above every name, Phil. ii. 10). So, on the other hand, while we do not expect to find in the Apocalyptic visions the signs of that humiliation, we do find him revealing a wondrous union with our humanity, we do find the recognition of his atoning death, of the blood which he shed, and mention made of his resurrection and ascension, and of the sympathy he felt for his own. Because he has been “slain” (an idea involving and not concealing the whole of his humiliation), he receives the acclamations of the universe.

(f) The doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel we read that the Holy Spirit abode on Christ (ch. i. 32), was given to him without measure (ch. iii. 34), constituted the grace of God which the Christ would use, just as the Baptist used the element of water (ch. i. 33, 34). Christ anticipates the bestowment of the multiform powers of the Spirit after he should have been glorified (ch. vii. 39). He is spoken of as the Giver, the Other Advocate (Paraclete), which is the Holy Spirit, whom *he* would send to his disciples, and whom the Father would send in his Name. In this most gracious effusion, it would be found not only that he would return *himself* to his broken-hearted disciples, but that the Father himself would also come and take up his abode with them and in them. This extraordinary series of statements is wonderfully confirmed in the history of the Church and in the writings of St. Paul; but in the visions of the seer we discover the relation of the glorified Christ to the Spirit throughout the history of the Church and to the end of time. Accordingly, we find “the seven Spirits of God” (Rev. i. 4; iii. 1; iv. 5; v. 6) represented, as in the prophecies of Zechariah, as the sevenfold, *i.e.* the perfect, expression of the effluence of all the energies of the Holy Spirit of God. They appear under different imagery, described as “seven lamps” and “seven eyes.” This sevenfold energy is clearly spoken of as “the Spirit” (Rev. ii. 7). The “seven and one” are blended, as in the prophecies of Zechariah, with those “eyes of the Lord which run to and fro throughout the whole earth.” This representation is preserved when the prophet is speaking of the Holy Ghost in his Divine Personality and independence (Rev. i. 4); but we do not fail to observe that he represents Christ as “having the seven Spirits of God” (Rev. iii. 1; v. 6), just as in the Gospel he sends forth the Comforter. Thus the energy of the Spirit is his energy. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. xix. 10). As the language of Christ in the Gospel shows “the Paraclete to be the Spirit of truth, who will lead to all truth,” and declares, “He shall take of mine, and show it to you,” so when the prophet is “in the Spirit,” he sees the sublime, commanding, regulative vision of the entire Apocalypse. The Spirit speaks in the lips of Jesus Christ, through his servant John, to the Churches (Rev. ii., iii.). As Köstlin, quoted by Gebhart, p. 133, says, “The exalted Christ continually sends forth from himself the Spirit, and the presence of the Spirit to the earth is an effective looking down upon it on the part of Christ, a streaming forth of his light.”

(g) The ministry of the angels is part of the machinery of the Apocalypse (see Moses Stuart, 'Angelology'). This needs no proof, but it is not absent from the Gospel (ch. i. 51; xii. 29; cf. xx. 12, 13, where angels are described as facts of Mary Magdalene's experience).

(h) The dæmonology of the two books is closely allied. In all these writings *διδόλος* occurs (ch. viii. 44; Rev. ii. 10; 1 John iii. 8). *Σατάν* occurs in Rev. ii. 9 and ch. xiii. 27. And frequent references to "the prince of this world," in the Gospel, are balanced by the expectation that Satan is the great *anti-logos*, who will deceive the whole world. He is in both Gospel and Apocalypse credited with being "the father of lies," the embodiment of the evil principle who "sinneth from the beginning." "For this cause was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

(i) The doctrine of man and of his condition apart from Divine grace. In the Gospel we find a twofold humanity—those who are of God, who are the Father's before they were given to Christ, those who have learned of the Father and have come to him, those who are "of the truth" and hear his voice, those who come to the light and are drawn by the Father; and, on the other hand, those who are represented as "darkness," as "children of the devil," those who will not receive him. The ungodly, unregenerate mankind are often called "the world," "loving darkness rather than light;" their greatest condemnation is that those who hate Christ do so because he tells them "the truth," and apart from the gift of eternal life in himself they will "perish." They will "die in their sins." This great contrast does also pervade the Apocalypse. The condition of the unsaved is clearly one of darkness, from the great emphasis laid upon light. Apart from the gifts of the Lord Jesus, man's true knowledge of himself ought to show him "that he is poor, and miserable, and blind, and wretched" (Rev. iii. 17, 18). Union to Christ, redemption by his grace, is that alone which saves either the hundred and forty-four thousand of the true Israel, or any individual of the multitudinous company of all lands, from the perdition awaiting them at the hands of the four mighty angels (Rev. vii.).

(j) The state of redemption or deliverance is described in the Gospel as "life," as "having eternal life in Christ," as being "united with Christ," "rejoicing in his companionship and abiding presence," finding satisfaction in him from the "thirst" and the "hunger" of the soul, and as being "washed" from all defilement by him. It is a state of willing "obedience," "keeping the commandments" of God, "doing the will of the Father," "bringing forth fruit," loving Christ supremely, and sent forth into the world to do there what he would do if in their place, and "overcoming the world." Now, the Apocalypse uses the same ideas in the imagery of poetry. Christ comes in to sup with those who have opened the door to him. In Rev. i. 3; ii. 26; iii. 8, 20; xii. 17; xvi. 15, adopting even the phraseology of the Gospel (*τηρεῖν τὰ γεγραμμένα, τὸν λόγον, τὰς ἐντολὰς*). The idea of willing, gracious obedience is described, and, moreover, Christ satisfies the great cravings of "hunger" and "thirst" (Rev. vii. 16; xxi. 6; xxii. 17) in the saved.

(k) The work of Christ, the objective work done by Christ, to save men. In the Gospel and Epistles this is described as victory over the devil (see 1 John iii. 8, 20; cf. Rev. xii. 5). He is also represented as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (ch. i. 29), while the reference to the Paschal lamb can hardly be concealed (ch. xix. 14, 36). Now, the grand image of the Apocalypse, by which the Lord is represented as securing the homage of the saved, is as "the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v. 9, 10; xiv. 3, 4). We do not find "the slain Lamb" spoken of in the Gospel, but we find the virtue of his cruel death, the flesh which he would give for the life of the world, referred to in ch. vi. 51; 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10; iii. 5, 16. There is abundant reference to the sacrificial significance of his death (cf. ch. xi. 51, 52). In 1 John i. 7 we read that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin;" and in Rev. vii. 14 that the saints "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" and in Rev. xxii. 14 the true text reads those "that wash their robes," pointing back to vii. 14 (cf. also Rev. i. 5; xiii. 8).

(l) The great prophecy of the last things, as described by the synoptic Gospels, had its first typical fulfilment in the fall of Jerusalem. This teaching of our Lord is practically contained in the first portion of the Apocalypse, and its presence here may

be part of the reason which induced the evangelist to omit it from the Gospel, the full tone and key-note of which is the coming of the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit. But just as that return of the Lord, his continual return, is the theme of the valedictory discourse, and as his coming to judgment is also affirmed in ch. v. 28, 29, so the continuous return, prefacing, heralding the final manifestation of his might and glory, is the grand theme of the Apocalypse. In full anticipation of which he says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Thus the Gospel and Apocalypse end on the same key-note.

These various points of coincidence in theological view and tone may be indefinitely augmented. See the development of the doctrine in both writings touching "the gospel," "the call to repentance," "the future of Israel," "the judgment," "the resurrection of believers," "the final state," amply discussed in Gebhart's 'Theology of the Apocalypse.'

We have now endeavoured to show, by comparison of the grammatical, lexical, structural, and theological peculiarities of the Fourth Gospel and of the Apocalypse, that there is a high probability that they were written by the same pen. Seeing, then, that the external evidence for the authenticity of the Apocalypse is exceptionally strong, and that the internal evidence is remarkably convincing, it cannot be concealed that the apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse is a powerful argument in favour of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

We may, therefore, claim to have shown that the synoptic "John," the author of the general Epistles, and the "John" of the Apocalypse, though exhibiting some features of difference from each other, and from the character of the author of the Fourth Gospel, do not so diverge from each other, either in spirit, style, or teaching, as to make the hypothesis of their identity at all incredible. But a far more formidable problem presents itself as soon as we examine the subject-matter of the Fourth Gospel. The following questions arise—Is the record of the Lord's life and teaching here preserved an historical document? Can we trust to its historical details? Is it indubitably the record of an eye-witness? Are its discrepancies (in various respects) with the previously existing narratives of such a character as to invalidate its testimony? Is the portraiture of Christ consistent with any of the ordinary qualities of a biography? Are the details of this Gospel so peculiar that, if credible witness to facts, they pulverize or evaporate the older records? Are the omissions so remarkable, and the scenes, times, and style of our Lord's discourses so unique, that the narrative really presents another Jesus, fundamentally different from him with whom Matthew, Mark, and Luke have made us familiar? Are the omissions by the synoptists of certain remarkable events recorded in the Fourth Gospel so amazing that the only satisfactory explanation is that the synoptics must have been in ignorance of the fact (e.g. of the raising of Lazarus), and is there a justifiable suspicion thrown upon the trustworthiness of the narrative? Are there traces in it of a date later than even the latest that can be attributed to the life of St. John?

If these questions be answered in the affirmative, then the external and internal evidences need the most careful scrutiny. There is no longer any question that learned men and illustrious scholars have endeavoured to shake their credit, and have demanded an amount of evidence in this particular case which can be dispensed with in less vital controversies.

If an honest and true eye-witness, such an individual as John the son of Zebedee, whose character sheds a glow upon the first century, could not have written such a work as this Gospel, as a record of facts, as a chronicle and reproduction of the words of the Lord Jesus, then some other hypothesis consistent with indubitable facts must be hazarded to account for a work of such amazing significance and mysterious grandeur. These have not been wanting, and may be divided into two groups.

(1) One group consists of those who cannot gainsay or resist the evidence of the identity of the author of the Gospel and Apocalypse, and do not dispute the position that John was the author of the Fourth Gospel. They, like Gebhart, Renan, Schenkel, and Matthew Arnold, affirm that we have no better *external* evidence for the existence of the synoptic Gospels and Epistles of Paul than we have for that of the Gospel of John. They press back decade after decade in the second century, and find that it is the extravagance of hypercriticism to doubt the very early use and recognition by

the Church, by heretics and apologists, commentators and copyists, and by other well known writers, of this celebrated document. They even admit that it may have been produced at a date when the son of Zebedee was still living, and under his influence and sanction, and even by his pen; *but* they regard it as a doctrinal and theological treatise in the form of a narrative, as a story expressive of ideas which had become current in the Church at the beginning of the second century, as a Christological romance, as a philosopheme in the form of a Gospel, making sparing use of any known or accredited traditions, deliberately clothing in the form of supposed fact current ideas of the Founder of the new faith, but not intended even by the author, whether John or another, to be taken seriously. Acquainted with the synoptic Gospels, and not intending to supersede them or clash with them, the writer is supposed to have used and modified their materials to suit his argument. Entering deeply into the spirit of the new religion, and comprehending in one expression the opposing interests and tendencies of the early Church, the author is supposed to have promoted its harmony, and originated some of the most valuable propositions out of which its doctrinal development subsequently sprang; but did not think or intend to convey the idea of the objective reality or historical validity of the events or the discourses themselves, any more than he meant to intimate that the angels, and dragon, and great whore, and grisly combatants, and golden city of the Apocalypse, were objective facts. That since Hermas, the authors of the 'Clementine Recognitions,' of the Books of Enoch or Judith, of the 'Divina Commedia,' or the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' or the 'Paradise Lost,' put into semi-narrative style the ideas which filled their minds at a particular period, so the author of the Fourth Gospel expounded his theory of faith and love along the lines with which we are so familiar.

(2) A second group of critics and reproducers of the 'Origines du Christianisme' have gone much further than this. They have endeavoured to dispute every early reference to its known use and recognition, and to find in it many traces of a date later than is compatible with its apostolic authorship. They have credited it with *docetic* and other *Gnostic* speculations of the second century. They have discerned in it a powerful anti-Jewish prejudice, and an endeavour to lower the claims of that part of the Church which regarded Peter as the chiefest of the apostles and the Church of Rome as the centre of apostolicity, by giving greater prominence to the Apostle John. They have urged that it nevertheless endeavoured to blend Pauline with Petrine doctrine, and promote the amalgamation of the two tendencies in the Church which had been aggravated by the John of the Apocalypse; that it was a theological forgery rather than a pious romance; that it was Gnostic in its origin, but misunderstood by those who defended Gnostic philosophy. Some have urged that, Alexandrine rather than Palestinian in its tendencies, it reveals the spirit and method of Philo rather than Jesus, and even if it records a few genuine traditions of the great Master, it sets itself to undermine and break up the Jewish-Christian position, and, especially in the Paschal controversy, to put the Eastern Church in the wrong, by carefully making it appear that the Lord did not keep the Jewish Passover. Further (say they), by representing the Crucifixion as synchronous with the hour when the national ceremonial was being solemnized, the writer intimated that the Passover feast was terminated and that Jesus himself was the Paschal Lamb of Christians. The entire theory turns upon and is mixed up with the speculations of the school of Tübingen with reference to the condition of the Church in the second century, and different authors deviate from each other in a marvellous degree as to the details of their reconstruction. The theory of Baur and his followers varies in different hands, according as they attribute to the writer this or that theological tendency, and are forced by the exigencies of external evidence to assign an earlier or later date to the composition.

We will deal first of all with the objections based on the discrepancies between the synoptic narrative and the Johannine, and then with other characteristics of the wonderful narrative. We shall afterwards be in a position to treat some of the numerous hypotheses which have been started to account for the facts which are before us.

### VIII. THE GENERAL RELATION BETWEEN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS AND THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

#### A. General statement of discrepancies.

On passing from the atmosphere of the synoptics, with their indubitable platform Jewish rites and Galilean villages; with their genealogical details and birth-stories, with the Messianic idea of one born in Bethlehem of the seed of David; with their portraits of the leading heroes of the apostolic band, of the mother of the Lord, of the high priest Caiaphas, and of John the Baptist; and, above all, with a portion also of their representation of the Man of sorrows, and the gradual and partial exhibition of the Divine nature of the Lord;—on passing from all this to the Fourth Gospel, we are conscious, and must admit, that we have been transferred to a new scene, and breathe a different air. We are at once confronted with great generalizations touching the power and nature, the order and significance, of Divine manifestations. Much is made of the ministry and testimonies of John the Baptist; but at first he is rather treated as a typical representative of the prophetic order than as the historic and well-known son of Zacharias the priest. His definite testimony is, moreover, resumed at the very point where it is laid down by Matthew and Luke; and, in fact, when he has passed through the experiences detailed in the synoptics, and is face to face with One whom he has recognized publicly as the Son of God, and as one competent to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

We are made acquainted with several of the disciples, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Judas (not Iscariot), Nathanael, Lazarus, and Nicodemus, of whom we hear nothing but the names elsewhere; of Nathanael, Nicodemus, Lazarus, not even the names. The principal scenes of the biography are laid in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, instead of in Galilee. Our Lord appears to have made repeated journeys to the metropolis, and to have excited from the first querulous antagonism, if not open persecution. The time during which the ministry of Jesus has extended has lengthened out from one year to more than two, if not three. A succession of feasts are mentioned, notably *three* Passovers, if not *four*, are referred to, whereas the synoptic narrative does not positively make mention of any Passover except that at which our Lord was crucified. Extraordinary events like the temptation, the sermon on the mount, the Transfiguration, the death of the Baptist, the institution of the Lord's Supper, the agony in the garden, the scenes before the Sanhedrin, are omitted, and a number of other events are mentioned concerning which the synoptists are silent, such as the two miracles in Cana, and three great miracles in Jerusalem. Two events might seem to have been inverted in their place. The synoptists represent a miraculous draught of fishes as the apparent occasion of the call of four apostles. These same apostles are favoured with a miraculous draught of fishes after the Resurrection; but in this Gospel they are represented as being called in the first instance by the simple summons of the Master. On the other hand, a cleansing of the temple, which the synoptists place at the close of our Lord's life, the Fourth Gospel places at the very commencement of the Jerusalem ministry. The synoptists appear to imply that our Lord celebrated the Paschal supper on its legal day—the night before he suffered—whereas all the *primâ facie* suggestions of the Fourth Gospel imply that, though an important meal preceded the Passion, the Jews kept their Passover on the very day or evening of the Crucifixion. Moreover, whereas Luke and the appendix to Mark speak of a visible ascension to heaven, the fourth evangelist closes the Gospel with the special promises and injunctions to Peter and the beloved disciple. These discrepancies of time, period, place, and subject-matter are by no means the most serious. We readily admit that a different tone characterizes the teaching of the Lord in the two groups of discourses. The great subject-matter of the discourses of Jesus in the synoptists is the kingdom of God and his righteousness, the personal conditions of approval and acceptance with God, the relation of the new teaching to the old Law, the principles of discipleship, the future development of the kingdom, the last things of the theocracy, the judgment of the great day; the leading themes of our Lord's discourses and dialogues in the Fourth Gospel concern the new birth, the revelation of the Divine love, the spirituality of true worship, the eternal principles on which the law of the sabbath turns, the Divine claims of Christ's own Personality, his pre-existence, the personal incarnation of the Eternal Son of God, his

astounding assumptions of being the Light, the Life, the Bread, the Salvation, of the world. He speaks of intimate, organic, eternal identification of disciples with himself, effected by spiritual processes, and of the grace of the Comforter as abundantly satisfying all the needs of the soul and of humanity. He declares that the Comforter would prove to be none other than the Spirit, which he who was one with the Father would send for the conviction of the world and the consummation of the Church. The manner of the Lord Jesus does appear at first sight to be very different in the two narratives; e.g. we hear nothing in the Fourth Gospel of mothers bringing their little ones, or of any sacred contact of the Master with little children. They do not even shout "Hosanna!" in the triumphal entry—which event is one of the points of connection with the synoptics—although the disciples themselves are treated as the "little children" of his love. The parabolic method of instruction seems almost entirely dropped. The inimitable apologues, which never once degenerate into fables, and never once go out of the region of the purely natural and human, are absent from the Fourth Gospel; or, at least, only appear in the form of symbolic terms and phrases, or mount into pure, lofty, and self-interpreting allegory.

It is said by some, with perhaps pardonable exaggeration, that while in the synoptic narrative the character of Christ ripens, the tragedy comes on gradually, and the conflict between the claims of Jesus and the wishes of the people is delayed till the final catastrophe, and that a period of great and perilous popularity is followed by rejection, misunderstanding, and violent reaction; yet in the Johannine Gospel the criticism, the repudiation by "the Jews," is obvious from the first, that the mysterious and Divine Personage steps fully aureoled out upon the scene, that he is as complete a Messiah, an embodied revealed Son of God, in the valley of the Jordan as in the valedictory discourse, as much so with the woman of Samaria as with the adoring disciples after his resurrection.

The synoptic Gospels move along three different, yet broadly consentient, lines, and events and sayings are arranged, so far as *order* is concerned, without clear purpose on the part of their narrators. The distinct unity of authorship is in their case open to much analysis and criticism; yet the Fourth Gospel is a work of consummate art, and constitutes an organized and marvellous unity. It is conceded that the whole of it has issued from one mind, and that a constructive force and powerful argument are evinced in the composition; that it reveals the workmanship of an accomplished thinker; that it is in no sense a *growth*, but a distinct, powerful, and beautiful *creation*. The style of the composition is far less Hebraic than that of the three Gospels, and the words attributed to our Lord are in a different style from those elsewhere by multifarious tradition assigned to him, and correspond with the style of the evangelist himself as evinced in his own First Epistle. This argument is rendered more telling by the assumption that all the characters, John the Baptist, Martha, and even Caiaphas and Pilate, use the same vocabulary.

In this very concession another is involved, viz. that a subjective element is more conspicuous in the Fourth Gospel than in either of the synoptists. The writer on several occasions introduces his own reflections *in propria persona*; and is, by those who admit the historicity of his narrative, supposed to have even interwoven them into his record of the discourses of the Lord.

Admitting that these *prima facie* discordances exist, we will submit them to examination, with the view of determining whether the Johannine and synoptic narratives do in any way exclude one another, or whether, assuming the trustworthiness of the latter, they proclaim the unhistorical character of the former.

1. *The scene of our Lord's ministry.* The synoptic narratives, after describing the baptism and temptation in the wilderness of Judæa, pass at once to the Galilæan ministry, and, so far as Matthew and Mark are concerned, do not bring our Lord to Jerusalem until the last Passover, in the midst of which he suffered. The most impressive appearance after the Resurrection is also in a mountain of Galilee, appointed as a rendezvous.

"John," on the other hand, brings our Lord to Jerusalem before the Baptist was cast into prison (ch. ii.—iii. 24; iv. 1—3). In the last passage Jesus is said to have "departed *again* into Galilee," so that the evangelist, when alive to the fact that he was describing a visit to Galilee, synchronizing with the first ministry there of current



tradition, points in the word "again" to the first departure from Judæa to Galilee which he had himself described, but of which the synoptists said nothing. In ch. v. Jesus visits Jerusalem at a feast, and there discusses the law of the sabbath, and justifies, by the loftiest claims, his right to work cures on that day. In ch. vi. 4 we read that the Jews' Passover was at hand, which Jesus, however, did not attend. He "walked in Galilee, because the Jews sought to kill him." This was certainly one year, and possibly two years, after the Passover mentioned in ch. ii. 23. In ch. vii. 2, at the Feast of Tabernacles, our Lord does visit Jerusalem (ver. 10), and in the temple, and on the Mount of Olives (ch. viii. 1), he taught and remonstrated with the people, and was exposed to their bitter and increasing hostility. On two occasions he escaped from their malice, and retired "beyond Jordan," to a place "where John at first baptized." In ch. xi. he came once more to Bethany in close proximity to Jerusalem; we are not told that he entered it, but retired to a place called Ephraim, where he awaited the last caravan advance to Jerusalem, so abundantly described by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The question arises—Are the synoptists silent concerning this lapse of time and concerning the scene of the ministry of our Lord anterior to the last week of his life? Are there any considerations which tend to throw light upon the discrepancy without impugning the veracity of the fourth evangelist? Two suppositions are possible; either (1) the latter, without any authority, and contrary to widespread tradition, invented these imaginary visits to Jerusalem; or (2) he remembered them, and, being eye-witness of the events, recorded them for the benefit of the Church. The first supposition is untenable, if he were what he undoubtedly wished his readers to believe, the most intimate friend, associate, and disciple of the Lord. In favour of the second supposition we ought to take into account that that disciple says that he had a home in Jerusalem, and was personally known to the high priest (ch. xviii. 15; xix. 27; xx. 10).

Caspari's valuable suggestion<sup>1</sup> throws light on the narrative from beginning to end. John the fisherman may have been in the habit of going or sending to Jerusalem fish from the lake, at the periods of the great feasts, when there must have been enormous demands for food. It does not appear, therefore, at all unlikely that Jesus, with some of his disciples, did take the journeys to Jerusalem mentioned by John; and that, whosoever else accompanied him, John did so, and thus became his host as well as biographer, the auditor of his mightiest words, the witness of his greatest miracles. It is, however, an error to suppose that the Fourth Gospel has expanded the brief report into a lengthened biography. Like the earlier evangelists, the writer confines himself to the record of a few solitary days, hinting, just as they do, the passage of time, and the occurrence of numerous events which produce a deep impression, but of which no details are given. Thus long periods of time are referred to without any particulars. Take the abrupt reference to the Feasts of the Passover already mentioned; notice the abiding in Judæa (ch. iii. 22), the walking in Galilee (ch. vii. 1), the abiding in the wilderness and the town of Ephraim (ch. x. 40 and xi. 54). Again, numerous signs are said to have been wrought, and teachings uttered, of which no special enumeration or further account is given (ch. ii. 23; iii. 2; vi. 2; vii. 3, 31; x. 32; xi. 47); besides the summary generalizations of ch. xx. 30 and xxi. 25. If both synoptists and John are alike fragmentary in their recital, what difficulty is there in supposing that, after the first records had been made, among the numerous and omitted signs and places of discourse, one who had special opportunities should have made a further selection?

Is the synoptic narrative, however, so absolutely silent about our Lord's visits to Jerusalem? Certainly not. The true text of Luke iv. 44 (approved by Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and placed in margin of Tregelles and Revised Version), has *Εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς τῆς Ἰουδαίας*, "He was preaching in the synagogues of Judæa." This is a note of time and place which would correspond with the first or second visit to Jerusalem mentioned in John. Again, the indication of great animosity among the Galilæan Pharisees, and one stirred up by emissaries from Jerusalem (Luke v. 17), touching the law of the sabbath and Christ's claim to forgive sins, an hostility which pervades the records of Matt. xii. and parallel passages, derives a great access of light when the conversations recorded in ch. v. are borne in mind or are presupposed. Further,

<sup>1</sup> 'Chronological Introduction to the Life of Christ,' p. 142.

Matt. xxiii. 37 records (as Luke does in his summary of the journey towards Jerusalem, Luke xiii. 23, 31—34) the remarkable apostrophe, "O Jerusalem," etc.! In each of these passages we have the startling phrase, Ποσδεις ἠθέλησα ἐπισυναγαγεῖν τὰ τέκνα σου; "How often did I wish to gather thy children together!" etc.—words which could not be applicable to the synoptic narrative as a complete account of the facts of the case. Not until we read of the several visits to Jerusalem, with the same uniform result of rejection, do we understand the "ye would not." Moreover (as has often been observed), in Luke x. 38, etc., in that portion of the Third Gospel in which many otherwise unknown but most invaluable teachings of Jesus are preserved, "a certain village, the home of Martha and Mary," is described, and an interview is referred to in which the characteristics of the Martha and Mary of ch. xi. are singularly photographed. This "certain village" can hardly be any other than the Bethany where they lived and where Lazarus died. The narrative in John presumes on long acquaintance and frequent visits already paid, and the visit recorded in Luke may without difficulty correspond with the visit of Jesus described in ch. vii.—x. The synoptic account of the advance of Jesus to Jerusalem implies familiarity with the place, acquaintance on the part of "the certain man" with the Lord (Matt. xxvi. 18). A similar conclusion may be drawn from Christ's message to the owners of the colt (Matt. xxi. 2, etc.).

The public proclamation of his Messiahship and the declaration of his supreme claims on the homage and obedience of the people, if they were restricted to what the synoptic narratives appear to involve, must have been excessively abrupt. Time was not left for any impression to have been made, or for the final decision to be arrived at, before the Lord pronounced his condemnation of the theocracy and retired. Part of the ungenerous implication more or less involved in the representations of Renan, Mr. Francis Wm. Newman, author of 'Philo-Christus,' and others, that Jesus rushed suicidally on his fate, by hastily and impetuously assuming the bitter hostility of the hierarchy, and then assailing it, is produced by ignoring the representations of the Fourth Gospel as unhistorical. Previous visits to Jerusalem, and a longer period of ministry than can be made out from the synoptic Gospels, are required to render what they tell us self-consistent and explicable.

2. *The length of our Lord's ministry.* While admitting the *prima facie* discordance to which reference has been made, it is worthy of special consideration that positively no single hint in the chronological records of Luke iii. 1 prevents our Lord's ministry from extending over four, six, or even eight years. Pontius Pilate was not recalled till A.D. 36, and Caiaphas held his office until that date. The fourteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar (however interpreted) is only the *terminus a quo*, and settles nothing. Though efforts have been made by some chronologists (Browne's 'Ordo Sæculorum') to compress the chronology of the Fourth Gospel within the limits of a year, this can only be done by unwarrantably expunging ch. vi. 3 from the text, and by bringing all the visits of Jesus to Jerusalem (including the first Passover, the unnamed feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Dedication, and the last Passover) within the compass of a single year (see notes). The reduction of the ministry of the Son of man within the compass of twelve months enormously aggravates the historical difficulties of the synoptic narrative. The period of our Lord's ministry, taken at the longest possible interpretation of the allusions in the Fourth Gospel, is so brief as to create, as it stands, one of the historical puzzles of human literature. No one can resist the impression of the supernatural rapidity with which Christ completed his ministry, or fail to contrast it with the prolonged and varied labours of Paul and John, with the ministry of Ezra, Hosea, or Isaiah, with the reigns of David and Solomon, with the legislative career of Moses. The contrast, again, of our Lord's ministry with the period during which Socrates continued his cross-questioning of the youth, and of the sophists and statesmen of Athens, is equally remarkable. Let the numerous and abundant opportunities which the great founders of religious institutions enjoyed for impressing their personality, and enforcing their teaching upon their contemporaries, be compared with the brevity of the ministry of Jesus. Take, *e.g.*, the careers of Buddha, Confucius, and Mohammed. If, however, the ministry of Christ were confined to *one* short year, and this diversified by several visits on foot from Jerusalem to Galilee, from Tyre and Sidon to Banias and Peræa, the rapidity becomes so intense as to savour of the unhistoric altogether. The records, therefore, of the Fourth Gospel, which provide a more

abundant and far more probable chronological basis for the beneficent ministry of the Lord, greatly strengthen by their apparent discrepancy with the synoptists the historicity of the *latter*. We have also already seen that they are not absolutely silent concerning a Jerusalem ministry.

3. *The day of our Lord's death.* There are grave difficulties in the endeavour to harmonize the twofold chronology of the day of the Last Supper and of the Crucifixion. In Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12; and Luke xxii. 7, we gather that our Lord celebrated the Paschal meal with his disciples. The natural interpretation of such phrases as, "on the first day of unleavened bread" (to which Luke adds, "when the Passover *must* be killed," and Mark, "when they kill the Passover"), suggests that no extraordinary deviation from the legal enactment as to the day took place on the occasion. "The first day of unleavened bread" legally began on the evening of the 14th of Nisan or Abib, after the Paschal meal was eaten, *i.e.* after sunset of the 14th (Exod. xii. 18, 19; xxiii. 15), the days being reckoned from sunset to sunset. It was not the universal custom to abstain from leaven on that day, but the 14th day, being so closely associated in its earlier hours with the solemn ceremony of the evening, was often thus hallowed, because "between the evenings" of that day—between three and six—the Passover was prepared, the lamb was slain in the courts of the temple, and the other elements of the feast were brought together for the purpose. So the whole of the 14th day (see Josephus, 'Bell. Jud.,' v. 3. 1) was often regarded as the first day of unleavened bread. We find also ('Ant.,' ii. 15. 1) that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is said to last *eight* days. At this Paschal supper Judas was pointed out as the traitor, and, according to all the synoptists, the Lord's Supper was instituted. Now, there can scarcely be any doubt that the supper, or evening meal, described in John's Gospel is identical with this Supper; otherwise, on two distinct occasions Peter must have obtained an indication of the person of the traitor. Moreover, in John's Gospel, as well as the synoptists, the night of the Supper was also the night of the betrayal. It must, however, be observed that John prefaces his account with the statement that the "supper" at which this indication of Judas's treachery took place was "*before* the Feast of the Passover" (ch. xiii. 1).

Further, this statement in John is coupled with a variety of expressions which imply that the Passover of the Jews was kept on the following day. Thus such an implication is found in ch. xiii. 29, where "the feast" is spoken of as still impending, and Judas is supposed to have received a command to purchase what was needed and give something to the poor, and he went out, as the disciples thought, to fulfil the commission. At all events, we learn that, on the night of the Supper, he did chaffer and agree with priests, and arranged his guard of temple servants to apprehend his Lord. Now, legally speaking, this would have been a violation of the Law according to all four accounts, because the 15th day, commencing with the evening of the 14th, was a holy day. Contradictory passages are brought from the Jewish writers, from the Mishnah and the Talmudists, to illustrate the degree of sanctity with which the 15th day of Nisan was regarded. Thus Tholuck shows from Mishnah ('Schabbath,' c. 23. 1) that a species of purchase could be made on the sabbath, and (c. 1. 1) that gifts could be made to the poor on "the sabbath;" while Godet and Schürer quote from Talmudists ('Beyah,' v. 2), "Every action which is reprehensible on the sabbath day is equally so on a festival day, such as to *hold a meeting of a court*" (cf. Josephus, 'Ant.,' xiii. 8. 4; 'Bell. Jud.,' iv. 2. 3).

But further (ch. xviii. 28), the Jews, we are told, would not enter the house of a heathen, lest they should be polluted, but that they might "eat the Passover." The natural interpretation of this is that the Paschal meal had not yet been celebrated by the priests and people, and the suggestion is then made that, while Jesus was hanging on the cross, the Paschal lambs were being slain by thousands in the temple, and that the people were generally preparing to eat the Passover. In addition to this (ch. xix. 14, 31, 42), the evening of the Crucifixion was spoken of as the *παράσκηυη* of the Passover, and that the holy day following the Paschal meal, by reason of its coinciding with the ordinary weekly sabbath, was therefore spoken of as a "great day."

If these passages from the fourfold narrative are allowed to stand in their most obvious *prima facie* sense, it is clear that a grave apparent contradiction occurs, on which the opponents of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel have not failed to lay

powerful stress. They have endeavoured to found upon it, in part, an argument that the author of the Fourth Gospel, in his resolve to give a theological bias to his narrative and to identify Jesus with the Paschal Lamb of the new covenant, deliberately set at naught the widespread tradition of our Lord's crucifixion having taken place on the great day of convocation. Such a course is thought utterly incompatible with Johannine authorship; inasmuch as we are told, in the synoptic narrative, that Peter and John assisted in preparing the Paschal meal on the night before the Crucifixion. Moreover, they have argued, from the tradition preserved by Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.,' v. 24, that Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, had appealed to the authority and practice of the Apostle John as having "*observed the 14th day, according to the Gospel.*" It has been assumed that John followed a custom which is directly repudiated by the Gospel attributed to him, and therefore some have urged he could not have been the writer, but that another and much later author had had the audacity to make these changes, induced by a settled anti-Jewish theological bias. Moreover, every attempt at harmonizing the narratives has been often contemptuously resisted as the work of presumptuous apologists, who are unable to appreciate the higher criticism.

Let us inquire what the quarto-deciman practice was to which, according to Polycrates and others, the apostle gave his sanction. "The Churches of all Asia," says Eusebius ('Hist. Eccl.,' v. 23), "guided by a very ancient tradition, thought they ought to observe the 14th day of the moon at the season of the Feast of the Saviour's Passover" (*συνήπλου*, not *συνήπλης*: it is important to notice this, because the Tübingen critics endeavour to identify this with the celebration of the commemoration of the Lord's Supper, by translating it "at the festival of the Passover of salvation"); "being the day on which the Jews were commanded to slay the lamb; holding that it was fitting to terminate the days of fasting on that day, on whatsoever day of the week it might occur." The Sicilian 'Pasch. Chron.,' quoting Apollinarius of Hierapolis and Clemens of Alexandria, strongly and explicitly identify the sacrifice of Christ with the slaying of the Paschal lamb, and declare emphatically that our Lord was crucified on the 14th day of the month. If the Tübingen hypothesis be correct, the early Jewish Christians terminated their fast and began their festival on the night preceding the day on which they commemorated the Lord's crucifixion. This is entirely incredible. The "festival of the Saviour's Passover" was clearly celebrated by them, whichever day of the week it occurred, at a time when the Jews were celebrating their Passover, and on the night after the Passion.

The idea conveyed by the above quotation was that the celebration of the Passover of the Saviour, i.e. the sacrifice of Christ our Passover, in place of the Paschal Lamb, took place when the Jews were commanded to slay the lamb, and was not a mere commemoration of the institution of the Supper on the previous evening.

The repudiation, however, of the Johannine authorship of the Gospel has been advocated on these most insufficient grounds. It seems to us strangely unsatisfactory to insist on this conclusion so long as any rational method can be discovered by which the apparently contradictory statements can be reconciled. The difficulties of doing this are obviously enhanced by the attempts which have been made by apologists to create a harmony by precisely *opposite* methods.

(1) Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Godwin, Wieseler, Edersheim, Lightfoot, Lange, Luthardt, Lieut. Conder, and McClellan have all, with high plausibility, endeavoured to explain every reference to the impending Passover in the Fourth Gospel as being in harmony with the assertion of the synoptists that the Jewish Paschal meal was held on the Thursday evening, and that that evening, in fact, was none other than the 14-15th of Nisan. They have minimized the importance of the reference to the outgoing of Judas and his supposed purchase, and by the fact that the synoptists all describe transactions of that terrible night which were all obviously contrary to the strict letter of the Law. They have shown that the *τὸ πάσχα*, which the Jews were going to eat on the day of the Crucifixion, was the midday festival, consisting of the *chagigah* and other offerings, which were eaten every day of the Passover week, and which were in the Old Testament called "Passovers" (see Deut. xvi. 2; 2 Chron. xxxv. 7-9). It is said that *pesach* does not mean the Paschal lamb exclusively (see 2 Chron. xxx. 22). It is urged, further, that the defilement of entering the Prætorium on a morning of the 15th of Nisan would last till sunset, and no later, and so would not have interfered with their eating the Paschal

meal on the evening of the 14th, but would have precluded their participation in the *chagigah*; that the various scenes of bearing the cross and of the Crucifixion were not impossible for Jews to have carried through on the day of holy convocation, because they might consider that the apprehension and crucifixion of Jesus was a kind of Divine service (ch. xvi. 2); and, lastly, that the references to the *παρασκευή* are all limited to the period of preparation of the ordinary solemnity of sabbath observance, and meant nothing more than the Friday before a sabbath, that it was a specially "great" day because the sabbath fell in the Passover week.

By thus dealing with every reference to the imminence of the Passover in the Fourth Gospel, they have endeavoured to make the two accounts entirely coincident.

(2) On the other hand, Bleek, Gresswell, Godet, B. Weiss, Meyer, Westcott and Mansell (in the 'Speaker's Commentary'), Plummer, Farrar, and Watkins have as strenuously endeavoured to strengthen all the statements in the Fourth Gospel, urging thus that the synoptists themselves enumerate numerous circumstances which show that, as Jews, they could not have really meant to imply that the transactions of the night of the agony and the Crucifixion day could have been possible on a holy day of convocation; that Simon the Cyrenian would not have been coming into Jerusalem, nor have been allowed to bear the cross on that day; that neither the women nor Joseph would have bought or brought spices to the sepulchre, nor would priests have rolled a stone to the door of the tomb; that the entire proceedings in the court and at Calvary were incompatible with the restrictions of the sabbath and great days of festival; that Philo expressly excludes legal processes, *δικαζέειν*, as allowable on this day of holy convocation ('De Migratione Ab.,' i. 150); that all the supposed violations by Jesus of the sabbath would have been insignificant by the side of so flagrant a series of deviations from sacred and traditional rule (Weiss, iii. 275); that even the synoptic narrative (Matt. xxvi. 5; Mark xiv. 2) shows that the intention of the chief priests was to destroy Jesus, "not on the feast day," therefore either before or after it,—a similar intention was formed by Herod Agrippa with reference to the intended execution of St. Peter (Acts xii. 4); that the term "preparation" is not restricted to the meaning of "Friday," but in this particular connection receives a special application,—it is called the preparation of the Passover, used obviously in its broadest sense (cf. ch. ii. 23; Luke xxii. 1; Josephus, 'Ant.,' xviii. 2. 2); finally, that the Acts of the Apostles speak of the day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day reckoned from "the morrow after the sabbath of the Passover" (cf. Lev. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 9), so that the Easter morning and the Day of Pentecost must have fallen on the same day of the week. But in the year of our Lord's death there is no doubt that the Easter morning was a first day of the week, and this circumstance, combined with the universal tradition of the Church, shows that the Pentecost was also commemorated on a Sunday. Consequently, in the year when our Lord died, it becomes evident that, according to *Luke's* own narrative, the Paschal lamb was slain on the evening of the Crucifixion.

This mode of vindicating the apparent superiority of John's narrative has been adopted by some, who boldly aver that the synoptists each severally made a serious mistake in saying or implying that the Jews kept their Passover on the night preceding the agony, rather than on the evening after the Passion, and that the tradition of the synoptic narrative was corrected by St. John, one of the apostles, who had special reasons for accuracy with reference to this chronological detail.

There is, however, no reason to conclude that the first three evangelists made any mistake as to the fact that our Lord did celebrate the Passover with his disciples, blending it with a second feast, or calling special attention to one momentous element of that Passover feast, and therein instituting the "Lord's Supper," and moreover that he did so on "the night in which he was betrayed."

In order to establish harmony on this hypothesis with the statements of the Fourth Gospel, we must suppose, with Gresswell, Godet, Westcott, and others, that there was a distinct indication in the synoptists of an anticipation of a whole day, so far as Jesus and his disciples were concerned, in the celebration of the feast itself.

Thus the tone of the message sent to the certain individual (*δελῖνα*) with whom our Lord had made his arrangements for the furnishing and preparing of the large upper chamber, is one of haste and surprise: "My hour is come. I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples." In other words, "To-morrow it will be too late. Make ready at once *to-day*."

If the question of the disciples was put on the *morning* of the 14th, then harmony with John's narrative, as understood by Christian writers—from Clemens Alex. and Chrysostom to Lightfoot, Baur, Strauss, Westcott, and Thoma—is impossible. But it is eminently probable that the question of the disciples and the answer and message of Jesus were all uttered on the 13th of Nisan, a day which was called the pre-preparation for the Passover. All the circumstances of the feast, the crowds of pilgrims, the difficulty of obtaining accommodation, would make the preparation of room and feast a longer process than could be accomplished in one short afternoon.

The difficulty arises in the expressions of the synoptists: "The first day of unleavened bread," "the days of unleavened bread," "the day of unleavened bread," which are generally taken by the opponents of John's narrative to mean the 15th of Nisan, commencing on the evening of the 14th; but it was on the evening of the 13th (*i.e.* the beginning of the 14th), at candlelight, that the first thorough search was made for the presence of leaven, and that people went forth to draw fresh water for making their unleavened bread. Hence our Lord hastens his proceedings on the very night on which the message was sent; *i.e.* on the Jewish commencement of the first real day of unleavened bread, he gathers the twelve in the upper chamber, in the real beginning of the day on which he was to suffer, and towards the close of which day the Paschal lambs would be slain by the people generally. That his lamb should have been slain in the temple was not a part of the original enactment concerning the Paschal meal, and on this, as on other occasions, our Lord reverted to the original arrangement. Further, the expression, "when they killed the Passover" (Mark xiv. 12), would be perfectly accurate if reference were made to the last hours of the 13th, in which, according to the Jewish reckoning, the 14th day was already begun.

Between these two methods of effecting reconciliation of the Johannine and synoptic narratives, opinions have varied since the days of Chrysostom. Both appear plausible, and it cannot be said that the question is finally decided. One thing is certain, that the two narratives are not hopelessly at variance, and therefore the frequent assurances on this head from opponents of the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel fall to the ground.

Let it be observed that the entire statement of the synoptic narrative turns upon the few words on which we have just commented, while the Johannine references are numerous and varied, though not positively decisive as to the day.

The preponderance of evidence seems to me decidedly in favour of the Johannine suggestions and presuppositions, and a close examination of the synoptic narrative itself shows it to be in close agreement with the Johannine, and the later Paschal controversies are in harmony with the conclusion.

Further confirmations of the Johannine chronology may be found

(1) In the language of St. Paul, who says, "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us," showing that it was not left for St. John, still less for an unknown writer in the second century, to have formulated the idea of the close connection between the death of the Lord and the slaying of the Paschal lamb.

(2) The Talmud explicitly confirms the accuracy of John's statements. Mishnah 'Sanh. : ' "Jesus was suspended on the evening of the Passover" (*b'e'erev h'appesach*), which is undoubtedly the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, *not* the 15th.

(3) Though the preparation of the Paschal lamb is spoken of by the synoptists (Mark xiv. 12—16), yet the peculiarities of the Passover feast are not referred to; *e.g.* the bitter herbs, the *charoseth*, the prolix ritual, the recital of the Great Hallel, the four or five cups of wine. The wine and bread portion of the Last Supper was expressly regarded as an appendix to the Supper itself (1 Cor. xi. 25), and not, in accordance with the traditional ritual, a part of the supper itself (Weiss).

(4) The simple supposition that a custom prevailed among the Jews of spreading the allowable opportunity of the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb over a larger portion of time, in consequence of the great crowd in Jerusalem at the time, would really cover every difficulty, if we add to it that our Lord, "desiring to eat the Passover with his disciples before he suffered," had chosen to select such portions of the ritual and such hour of the day as best suited his dread foreknowledge of the immediate future (see further discussion in notes on ch. xiii. 1, 29; xviii. 28; xix. 14, 31).

4. *The omissions of the synoptists.* The silence of the synoptists touching some of the most conspicuous events of our Lord's life, as recorded in the Fourth Gospel, is

extremely perplexing on any hypothesis, such *e.g.* as the resurrection of Lazarus, the discourses in the temple, the valedictory discourse, and the intercessory prayer. They do severally report much interesting instruction which had already been recorded by one or other of their number: why should they, then, omit the discourses of the Lord, which, in common with the younger son of Zebedee, either they had heard, or with which their informants must have been as familiar as he? No answer which will remove all difficulty can be given to these questions. Still, the following remarks are worthy of consideration.

(1) Each of the evangelists records some words and actions of our Lord which are peculiar to himself. Even St. Mark is alone in preserving the miracle on the blind man at Bethsaida (viii. 22—26), and the singularly suggestive demand of our Lord for “the little ship,” which might secure his safe departure from the threatening crowd (iii. 9, 10). Mark alone records the impressive parable concerning “the seed growing secretly” (iv. 26—29). The condensed form of the great parables of the last things, as given at length in Matt. xxv., recorded by Mark in xiii. 34, corresponds with a host of minute touches in every narrative which materially facilitate and augment our apprehension of the events which occurred. Again, Matthew alone preserves whole groups of special instructions and events; *e.g.* the visit of the Wise Men, the flight to Egypt (ii.), large portions of the sermon on the mount (v.—vii.), of the apostolic commission in x., together with numerous sayings in Matt. xviii., xx., xxi. 28, etc.; xxiii. and xxv. Luke, again, alone among the four evangelists, records the particulars of the birth at Bethlehem, the visit to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years of age, and the miracle which determined the final call of Simon Peter and the two sons of Zebedee (v. 1—11). Luke alone gives the occasions when our Lord repeated the great teaching of the sermon on the mount, under conditions of which Matthew says nothing. The most memorable of all is the repetition of the substance of the Lord’s Prayer (Luke xi. 2—4). Luke alone preserves the thrilling narrative of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain (vii. 11—17), and the action of our Lord with reference to the woman that was a sinner (vii. 36—50). He also alone enumerates the names of the women who ministered to Jesus (viii. 1—3). He takes special account of an evangelistic mission of seventy chosen disciples—a peculiarity of our Lord’s ministry of immense significance, and which the other three Gospels, the Acts, and Epistles entirely ignore. This ministry of the seventy was followed by a visit of Christ to the various places where they had prepared the way for his approach, as well as an extended tour of our Lord preparatory to his final manifestation of himself in Jerusalem (Luke ix. 51—56; x. 1—16; x. 17—24). Luke preserves the wonderful parable of the good Samaritan (x. 25—37), the visit to Bethany (x. 38—42), numerous instructions and parables in xi., xii., and pre-eminently xiv., xv., xvi., including the most impressive of all the parables. The healing of ten lepers (xvii. 12—19), with the special benediction on the grateful Samaritan. Luke preserves the parable of the “unjust judge,” and of the “Pharisee and publican” (xviii. 1—14). In addition to the “prodigal son,” the “rich man and Lazarus,” he gives the story of Zacchæus (xix. 1—10), the appearance of Jesus before Herod (xxiii. 6—12), the manifestation of himself on the evening of Easter Day to the disciples on their journey to Emmaus, and the account of the Ascension. These peculiarities of Luke are accompanied by other narratives, in which he preserves likewise words and actions of our Lord with which we are familiar from the other evangelists. The paragraphs of various length in the Fourth Gospel, containing matter peculiar to John, are reckoned as ninety-six; but the paragraphs containing matter peculiar to Luke in his Gospel are no fewer than seventy-two; and those peculiar to Matthew not fewer than sixty-two! A fair inference is that Matthew, Luke, and John each adopted a similar principle of selection from a vast store of material, and that the peculiarities of John are not more striking or idiosyncratic than those of Luke or Matthew. If the originalities of Luke receive our credit as having a basis of positive knowledge, then *à fortiori* we have a right to assume that the originalities of John have a still more trustworthy basis.

It may be said that the imposing miracle at the grave of Lazarus exercised too striking an effect on the state of feeling in the capital to suffer excision from any narrative of the last tragedy. This argument proves too much, for, on the same principle, Matthew, of all the evangelists, ought not to have omitted the reception of

the chief of the publicans—an act which must have exasperated the prejudices of many of Christ's followers, and contributed to the bitterness of the Pharisaic party; nor ought Luke to have omitted the miracle which Matthew records (xii. 22, etc.) as the basis of the very solemn discourse the points of which are preserved in Luke xi. 17—23.

(2) The omissions of the synoptists, when contrasted with each other, are a very noticeable and remarkable feature in their narrative. Matthew and Mark omitted the visit to Jerusalem when our Lord was twelve years of age. Luke and Mark omitted the journey into Egypt. Mark and Luke omitted the special injunctions to the twelve disciples, and the great parables of the coming to judgment. Matthew and Mark omitted the raising of the widow's son, and the parables of the prodigal son, of Dives and Lazarus, and numerous other teachings; nor can we satisfactorily account for omissions which, if they had been supplemented from the other narratives, would not have detracted from the apparent motive on which the several narratives were compiled. *Ergo* the omissions by the synoptists of matters found only in John's Gospel, and the omission by John of matters found only in Matthew's or Luke's Gospel, ought to be no bar to our accepting the peculiarities of John's Gospel.

These omissions of the synoptists may be traced in some degree to the ruling principle directing the composition of their narratives. Matthew's obvious purpose is to show the fulfilment by Jesus of the true Messianic conception. He is much concerned to prove that the Lord was the theocratic King: why should he then develop the course of hierarchic antagonism to the Christ from the beginning? The miracle on the blind man and on the dead Lazarus, though producing ulterior effects on the population of Jerusalem, favourable and adverse, were not fundamentally more remarkable than many other of Christ's miracles of power and mercy. To us, from the special detail by which they are environed, they acquire a more emphatic interest. The memories of the twelve (followed mainly by the marvellous tax-gatherer) were so surcharged with a sense of the supernatural power of Jesus, that these events were grouped rather than isolated. John had from peculiar circumstances been more behind the scenes, and saw how certain special miracles had wrought unfavourably upon the governing religious authority, and he set himself to unravel the animosity of this same authority, to vindicate the fundamental ideas, that the Logos incarnate had come to his own, and that his own received him not. Luke, in his intention to set forth the perfect humanity of the Son of the Highest, clothes him with the highest and most famous characteristics from the first. He was not one of the twelve, and therefore was neither at Bethany nor "Ephraim," but the great and wonderful narrative of Nain, coming, as we may suppose, under his own observation or cognizance, revealed the intense humanity of Christ even more than the restoration of Lazarus, and, having told it in a way which had melted hearts, he left the resurrection of Lazarus for others. Davidson (*ib. cit.*, ii. 363, 364) says the miracle took place, according to the Fourth Gospel, "only a few days before the triumphal entry." The narratives of the synoptists exclude it; but this seems in forgetfulness of ch. xi. 54, which implies a retirement of Jesus before the final entry (see notes). A consideration of importance has often been used to justify the omission. Prudential motives may have preserved the incognito when the synoptic narrative took shape, which would have ceased to operate long before John undertook his great task.

The coincidences of the three synoptists with one another are undoubtedly more numerous than their coincidences with the Fourth Gospel. The former are so abundant that they need not be cited. If they were confined to the synoptists, and if the entire platform was deserted by the Fourth Gospel, the conclusion would militate against the historicity of the Gospel of John; but there are special and numerous points in which John's Gospel coincides with the synoptic narrative.

#### B. *The coincidences of the synoptic and Fourth Gospels.*

The points of divergence have naturally created much inquiry, but the points of coincidence and identity between the synoptists and John are still more remarkable, and deserve special attention. We will consider them under three main divisions: (1) broad facts of the history; (2) the incidental allusions of John to matters of fact which we know of from the synoptists, but which he has himself nowhere affirmed or announced; (3) subtle peculiarities of manner of style and of vocabulary, which proclaim the fundamental unity of the theme and subject-matter. We will then deal with specific objections.



1. *The facts.* The synoptists and John agree in admitting that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (comp. ch. vii. 42 with Luke ii. and Matt. ii.), though this is disputed. Still, it appears to us perfectly clear that the evangelist records the supposed objection to the non-Bethlehem origin of Jesus, which had been refuted by the widely circulated details of the birth. It is true that he does not *reply* to the insinuation that Jesus was born in Bethlehem with the well-known historic fact, but he knows that his readers will have the answer ready to turn the taunt into a victorious proof of his Messiahship (Dr. Salmon, 'Introduction to the New Testament,' has admirably argued this point). They agree in asserting that his early home was Nazareth (ch. i. 46; cf. Matt. ii. 23; Luke ii. 51); that he left Nazareth, and treated Capernaum as his later residence and "city" (comp. ch. ii. 12 and vi. 17, 24 with Matt. ix. 1; Luke vii. 1; iv. 31; Mark ii. 1). The four Gospels agree in recognizing John the Baptist as the great precursor of the Christ. And the Fourth Gospel, as well as the first and second, refer to "the voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," as being fulfilled in the early ministry of the Baptist. The specialty of the Fourth Gospel is that these words and this reference to Isaiah are therein attributed to the Baptist himself. The synoptists coincide in telling us that John introduced the Messiah to the people, and refer to the circumstances and accompaniments of his baptism of Jesus, the opening of heaven, the voice from the excellent glory. The Fourth Gospel adds certain traits which had been omitted by the synoptists, such as the place of the first baptismal ministry of the forerunner, viz. "Bethany beyond Jordan," and inserts the fact that the Holy Spirit not only descended but *abode* on the Lord (ch. i. 32).

True, there is a striking discrepancy. In the Fourth Gospel we find the Baptist making use of the remarkable words, "I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water said, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Holy Spirit descend and rest, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit." Thus it would seem that John came to *know* the Lord by the marvels attending the baptism. Yet Matthew tells us that, when Jesus *came* to the baptism, John said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" This, it is alleged, amounts to an admission of knowledge, which the Fourth Gospel represents John as positively disclaiming until after the baptism. The word "knowledge" is a relative one. There may have been quite knowledge enough to induce John to shrink from baptizing one of such lofty character and known antecedents as those which prevailed in the family circles of Mary and Elisabeth; but John received such overwhelming conviction of the Divine commission and sacred self-revelation of the Lord Jesus, that he could with all propriety have said, notwithstanding his hesitation at the baptism, "I knew him not" (see notes on ch. i. 33). The Fourth Gospel takes up the ministry of John just where the synoptists close their fragmentary comment. It is not without special interest that in "the swanlike song" of the Baptist (ch. iii. 29), he uses a metaphor derived from the entire conception of "the Bridegroom" and the "friend of the Bridegroom," to which, as we see in the synoptists' account of our Lord's reply to the disciples of John on the subject of fasting, he reverted when defending his own disciples from the charge of undue freedom and joyfulness (Mark ii. 18—20 and parallels). This undesigned coincidence is singularly instructive.

The brethren of Jesus, the mother, and Joseph as the father of Jesus, are all referred to by the fourth evangelist (see ch. ii. 1—12; vi. 42; vii. 3; xix. 25). If John had entirely ignored the existence of father, mother, and brethren, it would have been in harmony with the supposed docetic tendency of this Gospel; but he, who describes the birth of Jesus as the coming into the world of the true Light, and of his being born of the Spirit, lays emphasis on the non-belief of the brothers (ch. vii. 5), and the mystery of Jesus being called the Son of Joseph (ch. i. 45 and vi. 42), for which he offers no explanation. There is remarkable undesigned coincidence here with those references to Joseph in the synoptists, and to the plot which the Pharisees laid, with the assistance of the brothers, to take Jesus by force as one "beside himself" (Mark iii. 21; *οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ* are clearly identifiable with the "mother and brethren" of vers. 31—35). Few features of our Lord's ministry, in the synoptists, are more certain than the fact that Jesus chose twelve disciples to be "with him," and to perpetuate his work. Now, John never describes the call of the twelve disciples, and, indeed, makes it clear that he was not always accompanied by the twelve; and yet, in ch. vi. 67, the *δώδεκα* are specially mentioned, and they are hinted as twelve in ver. 13 (see also ch. xx. 24).

Two celebrated signs of the Lord's supernatural power are recorded, not only by John, but by the synoptists, viz. Christ's feeding the five thousand and walking on the sea (ch. vi. 1—21). There are several additional traits thrown in, but the four records refer, without question, to the same fact, and the excitement produced by the first of these miracles is signalized by each of the narratives.

The anointing of the Lord at Bethany is described by Matthew (xxvi.) and Mark (xiv.). John clearly refers to the same event, and adds certain very noticeable features. The date is fixed "six days before the Passover," the woman's name is given as "Mary," whose personal obligations to the honoured Guest are explained by reference to her brother Lazarus, whom our Lord had recalled from the tomb. The objection to her enthusiastic love is made to be the special suggestion of Judas (ch. xii. 4—6).

The triumphal entry into Jerusalem from Bethany is recorded with characteristic features by the synoptists and John. The incidents and converse of the Last Supper are conceived from a fresh standpoint, and whereas the synoptists describe a Paschal feast, John calls it simply a *δείπνον*; while the earlier evangelists give the institution of the Eucharist, John describes at length the washing of the feet, and records sacramental *ideas* of the valedictory discourse. Yet they are all four agreed on the discovery and exit of Judas, and there are several matters introduced into the discourse which are illuminated by comparison with those conversations "by the way," which Luke expressly records (see notes, ch. xiii. 31—38).

The trial-scenes, the denials of the Lord by Peter, the character and conduct of Pilate, the mention of Barabbas, the title "King of the Jews," the presence of the women at the cross, the method of the death, and the fact and place of the burial, as well as the witnesses and chief incidents of the Resurrection, correspond with the analogous details given in the synoptists, while many points mentioned by John imply an acquaintance on his part with matters referred to by the synoptists, and which would be inexplicable except on the hypothesis that John had the synoptic narrative before him. This is very remarkable in the trial-scenes; e.g. John (xviii. 30, 35) makes it appear that the Jews had formally condemned Jesus in their own court to be guilty of death. The full account of this is only to be found by combining the narratives of Matthew and Luke; but John has said nothing of this scene. Nevertheless, the condemnation by the Sanhedrin, as given by the synoptists, is necessary in order to explain John's narrative. Many similar characteristics pervade the entire Gospel, and deserve special consideration.

Our conclusion is, that though there are great peculiarities in Matthew, Luke, and John (and John's are scarcely more numerous than those of the first or third evangelist), yet that the most impressive facts and cardinal events in this marvellous narrative are common to all four evangelists; that John's narrative presupposes on the part of his readers a knowledge of the synoptists, and throws in return great light upon them, and imparts in many crucial cases the additional fact which confers validity on them.

2. *The coincidental and diversified reference in the Fourth Gospel to matters which are given in detail, or differently specified, in the synoptic Gospels.* These references are twofold: (1) those which affect matters of fact and date and outward circumstance; (2) those which relate to the fundamental elements of the character and teaching of our Lord.

(1) Among the former: (a) The incidental reference of the Fourth Gospel to the vision and accompaniments of the baptism of Jesus. This act is not described, nor is the vision set forth, but both are involved in the account given by John the Baptist, and are recorded simply because they produced deep effect on all the subsequent character and ministry of the Baptist. (b) The reference, in ch. iii. 24, to the fact that "John was not yet cast into prison." This accounts for the descriptions given of John's continued ministry. There is no other reference to John's imprisonment, and none to his death. Ch. v. 35 implies, by the aorist *ἡβλήσατε*, that at that period the public ministry of John had been terminated. Why was the statement of ch. iii. 24 introduced? We see no other reason than that the synoptic tradition (Matt. iv. 12) had made the close of John's public ministrations coincide with the commencement of Christ's Galilæan ministry; and to show the reader of Matthew's statement that the earliest ministry in Judæa and Samaria preceded the departure from Judæa into Galilee. (c) The *εἰς τὸ ὄρος* of ch. vi. 3 suggests a well-known mountain, best explained by the

frequent references to it in the synoptists. (d) Attention has already been called to the apparent acquaintance with the character and power of the Lord displayed by Peter in his first introduction to him as narrated in Luke v. 6 (cf. ch. iv. 38 with Matt. iv. 18; Mark i. 16, 29). These events are all illuminated, and especially Mark's chronology, by the fact of a previous acquaintance with Jesus where John at first baptized. (e) There are sundry and subtle indications in John's majestic description of the night of the Passion and of the trial before Pilate, that the writer was perfectly familiar with the synoptic narrative, and presupposed acquaintance with its special details in the representation he made of the incarnate love. The profoundest insight into the blended agony and peace of the Saviour's spirit is given in the Fourth Gospel. Ch. xii. 23—36 throws much needed light on the sorrows of Gethsemane. Ch. xviii. 11, addressed to Peter and recorded by John, provides a thrilling reminiscence of the prayer, recorded on the authority of one or both of them, in the synoptic narrative. The supplementary theory will only account for some of the facts. Each of the Gospels presents some special revelation of the wondrous life with strange breviloquence. When these touches of divinely suggested portraiture are brought together, we find that we are not distracted with two or four Christs, but we behold one, and one only.

(2) There are several striking and difficult omissions by John of cardinal and momentous revelations of the Lord, which, if they had left no trace upon the Fourth Gospel, might threaten the unity and identity of the Christ as portrayed therein. These omissions are mainly "the temptation of Christ," "the transfiguration," "the institution of the Lord's Supper," "the agony in the garden," "the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God." A brief consideration of these omissions must suffice.

I have omitted further reference to the baptism, and proceed to the temptation.

(a) *The temptation.* The temptation is described in the synoptic narrative as occurring immediately after the baptism, and before "John was cast into prison," therefore in the interval that elapses in the Fourth Gospel between the first testimony of the Baptist and the return to Galilee in the close of the fourth chapter. The question arises—Does the fourth evangelist reveal the presence, in the course of his narrative, of the essential elements of the typical temptation? It is not necessary to insist on the recognition in this Gospel of the assault on Jesus by the prince of this world (see ch. xii. 31; xvi. 11), the devilish malice of Judas (ch. vi. 70), the suggestion made by Christ's brothers (ch. vii. 3), and the probable explanation of the great abrupt cry (ch. i. 29), "Behold the Lamb of God!" but it seems as though the special group of temptations recorded in the synoptic narrative was neither unknown nor unappreciated by the fourth evangelist.

*The first temptation* seizes on the suffering humanity of Jesus, when he was famished by forty days of fasting. "If thou be the Son of God," as the voice from heaven has proclaimed thee to be, "command that these stones be made bread." Employ thy supernatural power for the miraculous supply of thine own need. Thou art above the ordinary conditions of nature; therefore triumph over thy circumstances. Assert thyself. Do not demean thine origin by earning or begging thy daily bread! The reply of Jesus was, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." So far the synoptists; but John tells us that one of the earliest incidents of our Lord's ministry brings the God-Man to a marriage-feast, where the voice of a loving temptress said to him, "They have no wine." The virgin-mother longed that her royal Son should show forth his glory by expressing in imperial tones his claim to all the riches of these vine-clad hills. Our Lord resented this intrusion upon the choice of the method or hour of his self-manifestation; but he did not hesitate in the royalty of his love to give to others, and to do for them what he utterly refrained from doing for himself in his own dire extremity. None but they who drew the water knew that the Creator's hand had touched it. The governor of the feast simply attested the reality and excellence of the wine. The disciples believed. They had learned a lesson of his power, but caught a deeper insight into his heart. Christ never implied that he could not or would not turn stones into bread, or water into wine, but declared that the Word and the place of his Father for him were to give, not to grasp—to give himself for the life of the world; for his flesh was meat indeed, his blood wine indeed, for a starving and perishing humanity.

A similar lesson is taught even more vividly in the fourth chapter of the Gospel. There we find him seated, weary in the noontide heat, by Jacob's well (ver. 6). Why

does he, who could transform water into wine for others, not smite the slopes of Gerizim, and cause the running fountain to burst forth for his relief? The fourth evangelist records the affecting incident that, for his own refreshment from the misery of thirst, the Son of God asked an alien to supply his need. "He saith to the woman of Samaria, Give me to drink." The pathos of the position from John's standpoint is almost infinite. There is the same physical exhaustion as in the narrative of the other scene in the wilderness. Divine energy is shown to be latent in his will. His personal needs are as great; his self-restraint as sublime. He is content to suffer, and to cast himself on the charity of a Samaritan. This commandment had he received of the Father. By this Word of God the Incarnate Word doth live.

Nor are the parallels to the principle of his victory over the devil completed here; for after a while the disciples return to him from the city Sychar, with their store of provisions, and "they prayed him, saying, Master, eat;" and his mysterious reply confounded them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Thus the fourth evangelist, in luminous fashion, reports a conflict with and a victory over the same class of temptation as that recorded in the synoptic Gospels. "He saved others; himself he cannot save;" and "Though he was rich" beyond all imagination, "yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9). "It was more blessed," more God-like, "to give than to receive."

The second temptation of the devil brought the Divine Lord, either in vision or reality, to the pinnacle of the temple, to the spot whence the priest watched the first gleam of sunrise over the Eastern hills, in order to give the signal for the morning sacrifice. He saw the courts of the temple crowded with the early worshippers, and the riot and clamour of the priests' bazaar, and all the busy multitude intent on ritual or on gain. "Cast thyself down," said the tempter—commit thy way to God, entrust thyself to the arms of angels, and to the care of thy Father—"thou shalt not dash thy feet against a stone."

This was not a covert plea for suicide, but a bid for power. Had Jesus yielded to this temptation, how loud would have been the shout, "Behold, he cometh in the clouds of heaven!" The temple-throng would have hailed him at once as their Messiah-King; for he would have come "suddenly to his temple," in a manner which would have annihilated his enemies and inflamed his friends with theocratic zeal. The language of our Lord to this temptation of the evil one was another revelation of his filial reverence for God's holy providence. He protested against all presumptuous trifling with the promises of God. This superhuman method of descent upon the wondering crowd would forfeit all his conscious hold upon the Divine Word. True, it might precipitate a tumultuous rebellion against the power of Rome; but his own people were suffering from a far more terrible bondage and a more humiliating yoke. Signs and wonders like these would quicken no conscience, would purify no heart. Intent on self-glory, he would have had no grasp on ancient promise, and he replied, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He would not trifle with the *letter* of the revealing Word. He would not dazzle the eyes of the multitude in his own interest, and call it faith. Presumption is not dependence, nor is vulgar amazement at the power he wielded the faith in his claims which would save a single soul from its habitual distrust of God.

Now, our Lord is represented, even in John's Gospel, as resisting the forces of nature, and holding them in visible check. He walked upon the wave, but he did this to reassure and save his storm-tossed followers, and to deepen their nascent faith in his Divine claims.

The Lord was moved at Cana and Bethsaida, as he had been tempted in the wilderness, to assume the headship and mastery of the old creation. Should a similar marvel be suggested, simply to emancipate his own life from the hard and mysterious limitations which he had voluntarily assumed for our salvation, he would reject the suggestion with indignation; yet, if such acts as these, by change of circumstances, could become occasions for manifesting the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, for making known the royalty of Divine love to men, he never hesitated to feed the multitudes, to hush the tempest, and to raise the dead. So now, it would seem from John's Gospel that, though temptation to enter the temple by magical means and self-

glorying pride was sternly repudiated, it may have suggested *another way* of "suddenly coming to that temple," ablaze with the moral earnestness of one whose zeal consumed him. The profanation of the temple-courts by the huge market held there for sacrificial beasts, and also for exchanging foreign coin with the holy shekel, roused his prophetic soul. He asserted the sanctity of the temple. He drove the priestly traffickers from the sacred enclosure with words of menace. He provoked the hostility of the worldly hierarchy. He encountered the first murmur of the storm which gathered evermore in dark and angry clouds, until the temple of his body was riven in the lightning of the wrath which the devil's advocacy would have tempted him to placate by magical compliances, and subdue by dazzling symbols of his power. The first cleansing of the temple is the true and full response to Satan's ingenious suggestion, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down."

The form and meaning of the *third temptation*, as recorded in the synoptic Gospels, derives much elucidation from the Johannine recognition of the second. "The devil taketh him up into an high mountain," to some Nebo or Gerizim height, "whence he showed to him the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." There was too much truth in this boast of the spirit of evil, then hiding himself in the robes of an angel of light. The thrones of the world, from Nimrod to Nebuchadnezzar, from the Pharaohs to the Cæsars, had been builded with blood, defended with ambition and avarice, and often decorously veiled by splendid achievement. The honours of the world-kingdoms are won still and retained by complicity with moral wrong. Even the scales of justice have been loaded. Antiquity makes respectable what conscience condemns. Those who seek to win and overtop the world have to coincide with it and wink at its evil. The prophets of the Lord, by uncompromising front, have dashed themselves against the fortress of the world's sin, and perished in the attempt; have sought to revolutionize the foundations of power and the very material of human authority, and they have failed. The prince of this world has been too strong for them; and the bad succession of power passes on from race to race, and from generation to generation. Now, what is the devil's proposal and "temptation"—a temptation which has a side on which the Son of God could feel it? Outspoken, put into burning words it was, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me. All shall be thine!" Who is the giver? The object of momentary worship claims to be the source of all earthly power. To worship the devil as such is too terrible a blasphemy and too preposterous an absurdity to be a temptation to any being in whom conscience is not absolutely seared. That the Holy One of God should have regarded it as a temptation shows that by this worship was meant the honour due to possession and stability in human affairs. The temptation must have taken some such shape as this: "Do not commence the warfare with human disobedience by demanding fundamental changes of the ultimate and deepest sources of power. Recognize the authority and power of the world as it is. Utilize its follies. Compromise with existing ideas. Bear with a temple that is profaned; do not attempt to cleanse it. Accept the priesthood as it stands. Accede to the dominant and exacting tradition. Obey the sabbatic law as it has been interpreted by eager legalists. All the powers of the world from Caiaphas to Tiberius, all the wealth and all the honours of every state, will be at thy disposal if thou wilt worship me, if thou wilt even allow, or partially recognize, the *divinity* of the world-power as it stands." When translated into any language in which it is intelligible, it is but in other words the plausible pantheistic glorification of evil. Subtle as the temptation was, screened behind an effulgence of promise, the Son of God strips it of all disguise. With courage, he calls the accuser of the holiest things by his true name: "Get thee behind me, Satan. It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Any and every admission on his part of the legitimacy of expedient sin is resisted. No acceptance of any power but that which is based on righteousness, and no compromise with evil, can be tolerated. Earthly dignity, rank, and kingship are not passports into the kingdom over which he presided. Whatever be the issue, God's will must be the supreme law of life.

Such seems, in brief, to be the lesson of the third temptation, regarded as the devil's masterpiece, and made at the very commencement of the Lord's ministry.

The question arises—Does the Fourth Gospel record, at this particular epoch of Christ's life, any corresponding conflict with such a view of human affairs as that which the Divine Lord contemplated and indignantly rejected in his third temptation? (α) The cleansing of the temple was an emphatic repudiation of any sacro-sanct claims inherent in venerable sin. (β) An incident is recorded which more fully illustrates the same thought. A dignified ecclesiastic (ch. iii.) approached our Lord. He was high in social position, and of great repute. He was a teacher of Israel, a ruler of the Jews. He came with compliment and self-importance. "We know," said he, "that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man can do the signs which thou doest, except God be with him" (ch. iii. 1, 2). *We*, the Sanhedrin, are prepared (he implied), on our own terms, and retaining all our high position as the rulers and teachers of the people, to admit your right, to acknowledge your mission. The startling reply of Jesus is in subtle and close harmony with the reply made to the devil, as given in the synoptic Gospel; it was, "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Utter, inmost, radical, moral revolution is indispensable to a place in the kingdom of God. No compromise with prescriptive or traditional wrong-doing is possible. A high position in the Sanhedrin, in the great family of Annas, in the Pharisaic order, or in Herod's or Pilate's court, is not of the feeblest importance. These things will not expiate or justify a single infraction of the eternal law of righteousness. The kingdom of Messiah is not a kingdom of the earth, but it consists exclusively of regenerated men. Nicodemus answered, "How can these things be?" The devil vanished before the tremendous thrust, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (γ) When our Lord was seated by the well, some analogous problems were presented to him. The woman said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet"—"Decide for us between the sacred nationality of Samaria and Judæa, between the rival claims of the sanctuary of Gerizim and of Jerusalem. Determine the authority and glory of each." Christ rose at once above the controversy between these rival nationalities, and indeed above the clashing interests of all opposing states, in the sublime reply, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father." Kingdoms of the world, sacred shrines, holy places, have no part in Messiah's kingdom. "They that worship the Father must worship him in spirit and in truth." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

The simple coexistence of these two analogous streams of Divine self-revelation is suggestive. The Fourth Gospel does not "pulverize" the synoptic narrative on the one hand, nor on the other does that wonderful recital so stamp the life and mission of the Lord as to render the Johannine representation unhistorical. On the contrary, the story of Jesus at Cana and at Jacob's well, the cleansing of the temple, and the thunderclap which broke over the night of Nicodemus, run in strange and undesigned harmony with the story of the temptation. The Fourth Gospel places in the exact chronological position occupied by the temptation of Jesus a series of closely interlaced events which reproduce the temptations themselves and repeat the victory. The Personality of the Johannine Christ is none other than that of the synoptists.

(b) The omission of the *Transfiguration*. The Transfiguration, as recorded in Matt. xvii. and parallel passages, would have sustained the thesis of the Fourth Gospel, would have assisted the readers of it to recognize the supreme claims of him over whom heaven opened, with whom Moses and Elijah conversed, and whose countenance shone with a brightness greater than the sun's at noonday. The voice from the excellent glory would have uttered the most powerful comment on the great theme, "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." The assumption is that one of the three who were with Christ on the holy mount wrote the Fourth Gospel. On what principle did he omit the narrative? If the insight that the beloved disciple obtained into the heart of Jesus gave him a higher and larger conception of the glory of the Lord than this vision of his physical capacity and resources, we can be satisfied that he held his peace concerning an event so widely diffused, and one which, on the hypothesis of his authorship of the Apocalypse, he had far transcended. But the Gospel is saturated with the idea which found expression on the mount of Transfiguration. In ch. i. 14, "We saw his glory, the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father;" in ch. i. 17 the grace and truth of Christ is contrasted with the Law-giving of Moses; and the great Name of the Lord, that of the only begotten Son, is

the climax of the prologue. Moreover, the Elijah of the new covenant converses with his own disciples touching the mystery of Christ's sacrificial death, the decease which he would accomplish at Jerusalem (ch. i. 29). Jesus manifested his glory (*τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ*) at Cana (ch. ii. 11; xii. 41). Nathanael was promised the vision of the opening of heaven over the Son of man (ch. i. 51); and in ch. xii. 28 we hear emphatically of a voice from heaven, which declared "that Heaven *had* glorified the Name of the Lord, and would do so again." It is in the Fourth Gospel we read of "light and glory" visible to the spiritual eye, and that a revelation of the Father was made to those who apprehended his Sonship. The prologue is rich in the utterance of this thought. "The life" that was in the Logos was "the light of men" (ch. i. 4, note). The light which before the Incarnation and ever since has been shining into the darkness—"that light has come into the world" (ch. i. 9). Christ's own declarations convey the same thought, and assert the testing force of such a revelation of the archetypal light (ch. iii. 19—21). To the same image Christ reverted on two subsequent occasions. In ch. viii. 12 he claimed to be "the Light of the world;" and in ch. ix. 5, before he proceeded to illumine the dark eyes of the blind man, he said, "Whosoever I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." In ch. xiv. 21 he claimed that through and to "love" the manifestation should be made. Nowhere, certainly, more than in John's Gospel do we learn that the highest radiance falls on those who receive, adore, and love. John tells us in his Epistle that "he that loveth not knoweth not." Consequently, the evangelist learned throughout his career, and from an early introduction to Christ, that the highest glory and most vivid illumination were matters of spiritual sympathy and the revelations of love. The mountain of Transfiguration, though it conveyed the same ideas to him along the old theophanic lines, yet sank, after the lapse of years, into comparative oblivion for him, in comparison with the veritable illumination that love always searches for and finds.

Again, the account of the Transfiguration is the record of the final effect made by the early Galilean ministry upon different classes. The synoptists record the impression produced upon the following groups successively: upon the brethren of Jesus; upon his own townsfolk; upon the multitudes; upon those diseased; upon little children; upon fallen women; upon John the Baptist; upon Herod Antipas; upon the Pharisaic party; upon the world of unseen and evil spirits; upon the twelve disciples; upon Peter especially; and finally upon the heavenly world, and upon the eternal Father. The scene of the Transfiguration is a fitting climax to a vast group of testimonies. There is no such place prepared for it in John's Gospel, nor is it essential to the completion of any series of related events. The highest truth taught in the Transfiguration was universalized, and became a sacred doctrine in the words, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and *we* will come, and make our abode with him." And where Jesus prays "that the glory which he had with the Father before the world was" may encompass him, "and that his own disciples may see it" (ch. xvii. 5, 24).

The unity of the Christ of the synoptists and the Christ of the fourth evangelist is apparent enough. The omission by the latter of this event is justified by his obvious enlargement of all the ideas of the Transfiguration, viz. the inherent fulness of being, power, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; his at-homeness in heaven; the desire of the Christ that by any means and by full revelation of himself his disciples should see the essential Divineness of his life. Prejudice has been excited against the author by this method of his proof of the greatest glories of his Lord; but the reflection that the disciple looked back through the vista of years upon the events and teachings of Christ, is more than explanation of his choice. The doctrine of John renders the recorded fact of the Transfiguration comprehensible.

The omission cannot be put down to the unwillingness of John to deal with the transcendental revelations of Christ. The Apocalypse is adequate proof of that for those who believe that he is its author; but so also is the Gospel; for the latter is not silent about the special and unique functions and characteristics of the body of the Lord, e.g. his walking upon the sea; the physical effect produced upon the temple guards by his majestic glance; the obvious alarm produced in the mind of Pilate by his look and word; the miraculous accompaniments of his death in the stream of blood and water that issued from his side.

(c) *The omission of the institution of the Lord's Supper.* This circumstance is without doubt perplexing, if we are looking to the Fourth Gospel for a complete biography from an apostolic standpoint. But we must refer again to the fragmentary nature of this Gospel, which is as conspicuous as the fragmentary character of each of the synoptics. Now, when "John" wrote it the Church was an organized institution, which had passed through the severe ordeals of transplantation from Jerusalem to Antioch, to Corinth, to Alexandria, to Ephesus, and to Rome. Throughout the Roman world the Holy Supper had a recognized place. The authentic Epistles of Paul to Corinth show incontestably the grounds on which the universal custom rested. The synoptic Gospels had long since presented, with instructive differences and side-lights, the historic origin of the ceremony; and it was therefore far more probable that the apostle should have felt himself free to set forth some of its fundamental ideas and the deepest truths connoted by it, than that a theological writer of the second century, *claiming to be an apostle*, should have taken such a course. Such a writer could not be by any possibility *ignorant* of the reputed origin of the well-known rite; nor would he have dared to omit it. The omission, with a reason, justifies apostolic authorship. Let it be observed that the Fourth Gospel records the occurrence of a *feast* on the night of the Passion, and one in which the Lord, "having loved his own, loved them to the end," or "manifested that love even to the uttermost." It is in the folds and clauses of this wonderful sentence (ch. xiii. 1, 2) that the best place is to be found for the institution of the Supper. The entire discourse that follows (ch. xiii.—xvii.) is charged with the ideas involved in the Eucharistic service. A few of these may be indicated. (a) The mutual affection and reciprocal devotion to be cherished by the disciples. (β) The necessity or incumbent duty of these disciples to receive Christ himself into their inmost nature, to take hold of him, and to find in doing it that they were receiving him that sent him (ch. xiii. 20). (γ) "The new commandment," suggested in the anticipated betrayal by the son of perdition, and the foreseen denial by Peter. (δ) The prediction of Christ's speedy departure from them, but his continuous work for them, the promise of a return after that departure, both in a physical and spiritual fashion (ch. xiv. 28; xvi. 17—23). (ε) Above all, the repeated affirmation of the intimate, mystic, Divine union between himself and his disciples, and even between himself and "those also who should believe on him through their [the apostles'] word." This was to be effected by his departure, followed by his spiritual return.

Not only do many of the ideas of the Eucharist thus find expression, but it is obvious that in ch. vi. the mysterious phraseology used in the institution of the Supper had been anticipated. Our Lord had spoken of faith in himself under the imagery of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood." The flesh of Christ was "veritable food," the blood of Christ "veritable drink." In other words, his cruel death, if accepted as the climax of all his work, would be the life of those who should believe in it. Apart from such participation, no life was possible. "He that *eateth* me," said Christ, "even he shall *live because of me*" (ch. vi. 57). The first presentation of this thought, the earliest expression of this intimate union with and participation of Christ, is set forth under the image of "eating the Bread of life" (ch. vi. 50), accepting the truth of the Divine commission and nature of the Christ, admitting the fact that he came down from heaven, that he came with measureless capacity and resources to satisfy the hunger and thirst of mankind, to give eternal life, and to raise up the possessors of eternal life at the last day (ch. vi. 35—40). The next stage is the full apprehension of the *Incarnation*, and that his humanity itself, being a manhood whose entrance into the world was unique, had become the accessible form of the living Bread, the embodiment of a visible eternal truth. The glory of God was seen and was offered to man in his humanity, in his God-Manhood. This idea naturally perplexed some of his followers, but it intensified the faith of others. Christ discriminated once more, and laid emphasis, not only on the apprehension of his "flesh," but also of his "blood," not only of the blood which is the life, but of the *shed* blood, making it evident that the death of the Divine humanity was an integral part of the mission from heaven, or, as we have it in the synoptics, that he would give his life "a ransom in place of many." He declared that we have to drink this blood, to appreciate, to accept, and to assimilate as spiritual food, the stupendous idea of the death of the Christ of God. Apart from



that, there is no life in us. This principle being reiterated (ch. vi. 54—56), the Lord declares, "He that *eateth me*" (an expression which enlarges and completes the previous statement) "*shall live because of me.*" After the expansion and interpretation of the original thought, he returns back to it again: "This is the bread," etc. (ch. vi. 58). Now, which is the more rational hypothesis? Did an unknown writer of the second century, by this insertion of ch. vi. 35—60, and by subsequent omission of the institution of the Supper, intend to throw discredit upon the latter? or did the beloved disciple, upon whom this wonderful discourse made indelible impression, record the first occasion (by no means the only occasion) when Jesus spoke of his Divine humanity and his cruel death, and of faith in his Divinity and sacrifice as the condition of life? and, having done so, did the evangelist omit the record of the well-known Eucharist to show still more fully what he understood the Master to have meant by eating the body and drinking the blood of the Son of God?

The discourse in Capernaum, and the valedictory discourse at Jerusalem, are alike charged with the ideas, principles, and lessons which the constantly repeated Eucharist impressively symbolizes. It may be asked why should St. John omit the symbol, the concrete embodiment of spiritual ideas with which he was familiar? Why should St. John pass over the origin of an institution which is so well adapted to conserve the most impressive lessons which he proves the Lord to have given in other forms? In reply we say: (α) The repudiation of symbolic event was not his universal custom. The concrete embodiment and positive expression in historic fact of the ideas of the Temptation are proof that he did not as a habit turn from historic facts to spiritual phenomena, but even reversed the process. (β) The dawning superstition which began to enwrap the simple ritual may explain the reticence of the apostle with reference to its origination. (γ) The fourth evangelist does, however, record illustrations of the symbolic method. By recording the washing the disciples' feet (ch. xiii. 8), the spiritual significance of miracles on the blind and dead (ch. ix. 39; xi. 25), the breathing on the apostles that they might receive the Holy Ghost (ch. xx. 22), the author proved that he was not a bigoted spiritualist, or indifferent to visible symbols of eternal truth. Consequently, the omission of the well-known story of the "institution" is charged with high interpretative force.

(δ) The omission of *the agony in the garden*. The silence of the fourth evangelist touching "the agony" in the garden is very noticeable. There are, however, several distinct correspondences of time and place. The writer (ch. xviii. 1) shows that he was acquainted with and vividly recalled both. He records the fact of the Lord's crossing the stream of Kedron and reaching a garden (κῆπος more accurately describes the scene than the χωριον of Matthew and Mark, or the τόπος of Luke), which witnessed the cruel betrayal of the Son of man. Several impressive features are preserved by the fourth evangelist. It was "a τόπος to which Jesus often resorted"—a quiet resting-place. The party of the Pharisees, "with lanterns and torches," had been seen by the watchful eye of the evangelist descending the steep slopes below the city walls. Sundry notes of identity with the synoptic account discover themselves; e.g. the servant of the high priest is referred to by the synoptists, but his name is given here, and the right ear which he lost at the hand of Simon Peter is also specified; the allusion to "twelve legions of angels" (Matt. xxvi. 53) is curiously confirmed by the writer's statement that a χιλαρχος (ch. xviii. 12) was in command, showing that a legion of Roman soldiers was ready to suppress a revolt should one arise; and, finally, the language of our Lord to Peter (ch. xviii. 11), "The cup which my Father giveth me to drink, shall I not drink it?" forcibly recalls the solemn language (Matt. xxvi. 39; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42), "Take this cup from me: yet not as I will, but as thou wilt." Nevertheless, it is most certain that the tone of matchless patience and courage, the mien of ineffable dignity, with which the Lord met and rebuked the guard, and proved the imperial power he could have wielded (if he had chosen) for the utter discomfiture of his enemies, form a striking contrast with the scene which John must have witnessed in the depth of that olive shade. Luke himself may have even learned from John the terrible transaction he recorded (xxii. 43, 44). Why, then, should the evangelist have omitted it? Why, in place of the agonizing, bleeding sacrifice, with strong crying and tears, does he give us an imperial potentate, a match for all the devilry of Judas, and all the malice of the Pharisees, and all the power of Caesar? No hint of weakness, or

victory over his own feelings, but an appropriate historic close to the sublime intercession of ch. xvii. According to Keim, if this account be historic, the synoptists' narrative is utterly "pulverized." Let two or three remarks be allowed their fair weight. It is the method of this evangelist to make frequent, nay perpetual, gaps in his narrative, bringing into *apparent* juxtaposition events which are separated not only by hours, but by days and months of thrilling interest. The hour and power of darkness did intervene between the intercession and the betrayal. When Jesus came forth from the garden, the darkest hour was over. The "Thy will be done" had consecrated Gethsemane and humanity itself. *The moment for action had arrived, the bracing that comes from the arrival of the climax had supervened.* The angel *had* strengthened him. He had been heard for his godly fear (Heb. v. 7). Even the synoptists show that there was no shrinking, no bloody sweat now, but the forthcoming of miraculous energy to heal Malchus (Luke xxii. 51), a willingness to rebuke the rabble that had come under protection of the Roman guard, and the utterance of words to Judas that drove him to despair. The contrast between John and the synoptists is not in the outward demeanour of Jesus, which all four evangelists describe in corresponding though not in identical phrase, but in the omission by John and the insertion by Matthew and Luke of the great victory which the suffering Lord had won over the prince of this world. Just as the Fourth Gospel takes up the ministry of the Baptist at the point where the synoptists laid it down, and as the writer omits long and wonderful scenes from the trial before Caiaphas which would have sustained the general thesis of his own Gospel—omitted because the whole narrative had been abundantly illustrated in the current Gospels—so now he omits the awful record of the inner life of Jesus given by the synoptists, and simply records the manner of his capture and its sublime accompaniments. But the reason for the omission must be profoundly different from that attributed to the author by the school of Baur. The fourth evangelist does not ignore the sorrow and weakness of the Lord. His apprehension of desertion, his suffering from the hatred of the world, his bitter sense of the cruelty of the "son of perdition," are seen (ch. xvi. 2, 3, 32; xvii. 12; xv. 18, 22—24). In ch. xiv. 30 Christ admitted that the prince of this world "cometh," though he added, "he hath nothing in me."

In Christ's approach to the grave of Lazarus (ch. xi. 33—35) we have one of the most explicit revelations contained in the entire Gospels of how the Lord took human sorrow and all the mystery of death upon himself, and broke out into sighs, groans, and tears. But, more than all, the words of Jesus to the Greeks who sought to see him are a veritable anticipation of the agony of the garden (ch. xii. 23—33). His soul was "troubled." He was ready to cry, "Father, save me from this hour." The sense of his mission led him to cry, "Father, glorify thy Name!" Moreover, the entire Gospel from end to end is written under the shadow of the cross. One of its chief notes is struck by the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God!" The first "sign" in Jerusalem was a prelude of the final tragedy. Every paragraph reveals the darkness in angry conflict with the light, while in ever-varying circumstances the Lord proclaims that, however hard to flesh and blood, yet the law of his being was to finish the work which the Father had given him to do (ch. iv. 34; v. 30; vi. 38; viii. 29, 38; xvii. 4). The "agony" of the synoptic Gospels is spread in the Fourth Gospel over the entire evangel, from the wilderness of Judæa to the cross itself, just as the "Temperament" is obviously diffused throughout the mystery of his incarnation, and just as the Transfiguration aureole of the synoptists gleams through every cloud, from the glory he had with the Father before the world was, till he ascends in very deed to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God.

(e) The omission of the *visible ascension* of the glorified body of the Lord is a peculiarity which the Fourth Gospel shares with the First Gospel, and, unless the closing appendix to Mark's narrative be genuine, with the Second Gospel also. We owe this comforting and inspiring assurance to Luke and to Paul. If the identity of authorship of the Apocalypse and Fourth Gospel may be assumed—a fact which, with all its *primâ facie* difficulties, will, we believe, ultimately prevail—we see that the apostle had given the Church abundant proof, from his own prophetic intuition and wondrous vision, that Jesus was seated on the right hand of God, and wore still the signs and proofs of his awful human and earthly experience. He saw him as King of kings, as a Lamb of God, appearing as though he had been slain, as one who "liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore."

The Apocalypse, with its promise of the Lord's return in majesty to claim his own, to judge the dead, small and great, was the Johannine record of the Ascension. But this is not all. Jesus is represented in the Gospel as in the fulness of his Divine nature being in heaven, although accessible to men on earth. He came down from heaven. He commenced a manifestation in the flesh—he who was for evermore in heaven (ch. iii. 13). But more than this, he forewarned those who doubted the possibility of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, that the time was coming when some at least should see him "ascend to where he was before" (ch. vi. 62). He told the Magdalene that he was about to "ascend to the Father" (ch. xx. 17), and, when that was effected, she might with the touch of the Spirit grasp and hold him fast. So though the formal and stately departure of his corporeal manifestation is not again recited, all the conditions on which it rests are more abundantly exhibited by John than by either of the synoptists. We now proceed to notice—

(3) *Incidental allusions* in the Fourth Gospel to features of Christ's teaching and imagery with which we are familiar in the synoptists. These allusions reveal an identity of personage in the sublime character they all alike portray. "The bride and bridegroom" in Matt. ix. 15, given in special reference to the questions raised by disciples of John the Baptist, is curiously consonant with John's language about the bride, the bridegroom, and friend of the bridegroom (see notes, ch. iii. 29). The reference to the harvest in ch. iv. 35 corresponds to the frequent employment of the same imagery in Matt. ix. 37 and xiii. 30. The comparison of the vine in ch. xv. 1 with Matt. xxi. 33.

Numerous sayings which are attributed to Jesus by the synoptists fell from his lips amid other circumstances, as Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4; Luke iv. 24, where the diminished honour of a prophet amongst his own people is referred to. This finds a striking though difficult occasion on ch. iv. 44 (see notes). The remarkable, paradoxical saying, "He that loveth his life loseth it," etc. (ch. xii. 25), is repeated twice in Matthew (x. 39; xvi. 25) and Luke (xvii. 33). The proverbial utterance (ch. xiii. 16), "The servant is not greater than his lord," is repeated with rich variety of illustration in Luke vi. 40 and Matt. x. 24. And ch. xiii. 20, "He that receiveth whomsoever I shall send, receiveth me; he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me," must be compared with Matt. x. 40 and Luke x. 16. The mode of calling the impotent man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," in ch. v. 8, verbally agrees with the summons given to the paralytic in Mark ii. 9. In ch. vi. 20, "It is I; be not afraid," closely corresponds with Matt. xiv. 27. The idiomatic expression, "taste of death," is found ch. viii. 52 and Mark ix. 1. The awful announcement (ch. xiii. 21), "One of you shall betray me," must be compared with Matt. xxvi. 21 and Mark xiv. 18. There is curious correspondence as to the value and quantity of *bread* required for the feeding of the five thousand (ch. vi. 7 and Mark vi. 37). The description of believing union with himself as "coming" to him is common to ch. vi. 37 and Matt. xi. 28; and ch. vi. 46 should also be compared with Matt. xi. 27. Our Lord's obnoxiousness to the Pharisees on the sabbatic question is expressed in much the same form in ch. ix. 16 and Matt. xii. 2. His startling language about the poor, in ch. xii. 8, is found also in Matt. xxvi. 11; the idiosyncratic expression, "He that sent me," in ch. xii. 44 and Luke ix. 48. The promise that he gave, to come again and abide with his disciples (ch. xiv. 18, 19), is grandly represented in Matt. xxviii. 20. The warnings of future distress to his disciples (ch. xvi. 1, 2) should be compared with Matt. x. 17; xiii. 21. Numerous correspondences may be also noticed between the statements of John and the synoptists with reference to the trial-scenes, notwithstanding the characteristic differences. These allusive and varied harmonies must be added to all the other facts alleged to show that the great Personage referred to in the synoptist and Fourth Gospels is identical. They both alike show that "never man spake like this man." (Cf. here table by Godet, 'Gospel,' vol. i. p. 155; Luthardt, 'St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel,' pp. 232—235.) The following are important: In Matt. xxvi. 61; xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 58; xv. 29, there is distinct reference to words of Jesus which are to be found only in ch. ii. 19, "Destroy this temple," etc. The great utterance in ch. vi. 35, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger," etc., corresponds with Matt. v. 6. Ch. xii. 7 most curiously corresponds with Mark xiv. 8. The bitter cry in ch. xii. 27 must be compared with Matt. xxvi. 39, and ch. xiii. 3 with Matt. xi. 27. The reference to the cock-crowing in ch. xiii. 38 with Matt. xxvi. 34; Mark xiv. 30; Luke xxii. 34; and ch. xv. 20, 21 with Matt. x. 23, 25; and ch.

xviii. 11 with Matt. xxvi. 29; and ch. xviii. 20 with Matt. xxvi. 55; and ch. xviii. 37 with Matt. xxvii. 11.

(4) *The subtle indications of identity of character are not less wonderful.*<sup>1</sup> (a) The delicate *sensitiveness* of Christ to the special and varied interests of those with whom he comes into contact meets us throughout the synoptist narrative; e.g. in taking children to his arms, just when others would drive them away; his pitying the mothers in the approaching siege of Jerusalem; his touching the loathsome leper; the language to the woman with the issue of blood, "Daughter, be of good comfort;" his taking the father and mother of the maiden into the room where he was about to raise her from the dead, with "Give her something to eat;" the "Weep not" to the widow of Nain; the arranging of the five thousand in companies of fifty; the "Suffer ye thus far" in the healing of Malchus;—are all illustrations that might be multiplied. But in the Fourth Gospel we have his language to the woman of Samaria, "Go, call thy husband;" his phrase to the impotent man, and the woman taken in adultery, "Go, sin no more;" the circumstance that he "found" the excommunicated once-blind beggar in the misery to which he had been brought by his loyalty; his coming to the grave of Lazarus with groans and tears of sympathy; the "Loose him, and let him go," of the same narrative; the soothing of the perturbed spirits of the apostles with "It is I; be not afraid;" his sympathy even with the perturbations of Pilate; the "Woman, behold thy son," uttered from the cross.

(b) *The tact* of Jesus, not only in his beneficence, but in his controversial method, and his self-defence. In the synoptic Gospels he always, not only parried a blow, but made it the occasion of unveiling some great lessons. Thus, e.g., when the Sadducees wished to raise a scornful laugh about the future life, he lifted the question into a higher region; when his disciples were accused of sabbath-breaking, he quoted Hosea's "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

The way in which he *looked* his reproach is repeatedly referred to by Mark. The manner in which he vindicated his own honour in doing acts of kindness on the sabbath was extremely remarkable, as he uniformly directed his malicious opponents to consider some great principle which they might be willing to ignore, but could not gainsay. In precisely the same way he vindicated his claim to heal the impotent man (ch. v. 17) by the sublime assertion, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" i.e. these gracious energies are always going on. As in Matthew he appeals to the profanation of the temple by the priests, so he refers in John to the circumcision of children on the sabbath day, with a similar intent. So the "look of Jesus" is commemorated in the Fourth Gospel as well as by Mark. "The Lord *looked* on Simon," and gave him the name of "Cephas." The marvellous influence which his mere presence exerted on his adversaries is emphatically recorded in Luke's account of his reception at Nazareth, but is more than once repeated in the Fourth Gospel (ch. vii. 44—46; viii. 59; x. 31; xviii. 6). Such a characteristic trait is not a casual coincidence.

(c) *The humane motives* of his miracles are abundantly conspicuous, not only in the synoptists, but also in the Fourth Gospel. The multiplication of the bread is common to both, but the transformation of the water into wine and his consideration of the villagers' need correspond with the care with which he would pay Peter's tribute money, and with the fact that he provided a repast for his disciples after the resurrection. The length of the suffering of the infirm woman (synoptists) corresponds with that of the impotent man (ch. v.), as a predisposing cause of his bounty. The reason given for his walking on the sea in John is allied to the whole teaching of the synoptists, "He saved others; himself he could not save."

(d) Certain idiosyncrasies of *style* which are quite inimitable proclaim the identity of the great Prophet and Teacher. It is true that Renan and others have professed to feel so great a difference in passing from the discourse in Matthew, the parable groups and the "delicious sentences" of the synoptic account, to the controversial and sustained exposition and lengthened arguments of the Fourth Gospel, that they dispute the verisimilitude of the latter. But is the contrast of style so great? In the sermon on the mount there is the series of contrasts between the Lord's own ethical judgments and

<sup>1</sup> On this subject, see G. A. Chadwick, D.D., 'Christ bearing Witness to Himself,' to whom I am here greatly indebted.

that which had been said to them of old time, followed by the antithesis between the highest forms of the Divine life and the heartless forms of the Pharisee, the publican and hypocrite, and the entire thunder-peal is brought to its final deliverance in the rhetorical climax. To our thinking, no one discourse in the Fourth Gospel is so prolonged and sustained in argument, so unbroken by dialogue, as Matt. v.—vii. Even the valedictory discourse flows on (ch. xiv.) in answer to numerous questions put by Philip, Thomas, Judas, and Simon; then is broken in two by change of scene and then by address to the Father. It may be said that the sermon on the mount is rather the work of Matthew than of the Lord, a piecing together of great utterances. We dispute that position; but if it be conceded for the sake of argument, this contrast between the synoptist and Johannine records fails.

Our Lord's discourses are characterized by intense and vivid *repetition* of certain ideas under slightly different forms. Thus the illustrations used in the discourse at Nazareth (Luke iv. 25, 27) should be compared with Luke xi. 31, 32; xii. 24, 27, 51, 53, and with the gathering intensity of the three parables of ch. xv. We do not find the same discourses in the Fourth Gospel, but we read the evidence of the same commanding mind and its fundamental method. Take ch. iii. 3 and 5 for the *repetition* of the condition of admission into the kingdom of God. Notice the gathering intensity of meaning in the discourse in ch. vi. concerning participation (i.) "in my flesh," (ii.) "in my flesh and blood," (iii.) "eating me." The impression of a repeated and doubled thought occurs in ch. x. 7, 9 and 11, 14. Let the construction of the sermon on the mount be compared with that of the controversial discourse in ch. v., and the same kind of intensifying progress is conspicuous.

(e) The *conduct* of our Lord, as seen in the treatment of his relatives, reveals in striking accord the fourfold narrative, and the identity of the John of the Fourth Gospel with that of the synoptists. In Luke ii. 49, "Wist ye not that I must be [in the affairs (house) of my Father?]" about my Father's business?" In Mark iii. 21 and 31—35 the lack of true perception of his claims on the part of his kindred is brought into contact with his admission to closest intimacy of those that "do the will of my Father" (cf. Matt. xii. 50). The Fourth Gospel also makes it clear that the mother of Christ was no longer competent to rule the methods of his self-manifestation (ch. ii. 4); that his brethren did not believe on him (ch. vii. 6); that he entrusted the care of his mother to his spiritual relation and beloved disciple, rather than to the brother James (ch. xix. 26, 27). These personal traits are most remarkable if there be not a fundamental identity of subject.

(f) There are further deep *harmonies of illustrative thought*. In Matt. xxi. 37 the Lord speaks of his Father sending his *Son* to the wicked husbandmen. In ch. viii. 35, 36 the servants are contrasted with "the Son that abideth for ever." "The Father's house" is the great climax of the group of parables in Luke xv.; "the Father's house," with its "many mansions," is the home which (ch. xiv. 1, 2) Christ is going to prepare for his disciples. In the synoptists we are told that we must become as little children (Matt. xviii. 3); in John that we must be "born again" (ch. iii. 3; cf. also xiii. 33). The imagery of the dying and expanding seed, the subsequent growth, is frequently repeated in Matt. xiii.; but it is also found in ch. xii. 24. The "shepherd" in Luke's parable brings home the lost sheep; but in ch. x. 2—16 our Lord speaks of himself as "the good Shepherd." The barren fig tree is to be cut down, the fruitless plant rooted up, in Luke xiii. 8 and Matt. xv. 13; but in ch. xv. 2 Christ declares, "Every branch in me which beareth not fruit, is taken away, and every branch which beareth fruit, he pruneth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Hostile critics have objected to the Fourth Gospel that it is a continuous utterance on the part of Jesus concerning himself, and of his own unique relation to the Father and to the world, and of his own functions and claims; whereas in the earlier Gospels the Lord was content to deal with the duties and prospects and characteristics of humanity or of the kingdom of God, and is comparatively silent concerning himself. Is this so? Is the contrast so great as is often assumed? We admit that very early in the Fourth Gospel Jesus assures Nathanael that he should "henceforth find heaven opened, and see angels ascending and descending on the Son of man" (ch. i. 51); and in the language to Nicodemus he implies that he is the Son given by the Father, and is the Son who came down from heaven; but the great burden of that address is that "regeneration"

is indispensable, that judgment is the correlative of the offer of life, that those that do the truth come to the light. Again, in ch. v., in the great discourse to the authorities, he asserts a series of claims based on his unique relation to the Father and to the universe, and in every possible variety of form this example is followed out in ch. vi., vii., viii.—x., xiii.—xvii. The prodigious and astonishing self-consciousness, the *ego* with its most amazing memories and transcendental force, the realization even in human experience and on human lips of the eternal judgments and the eternal life, do call repeated attention to the Messenger. Yet from end to end this is ethically subordinated to the well-being of man and the saving of the world. Thus he would give eternal life to those who labour for it (ch. vi. 27); he would quench human hunger and thirst (ch. iv. 10, 14; vi. 32, 50, 57, 58). It is impossible not to see that while he was mysteriously conscious of the most unique claims, and that they were of supreme moment to men, yet the end of the self-manifestation was the life, light, peace, love, liberty, deliverance, and victory over the world, after the fashion of his own life. The reason for the utterance of every claim and lofty prerogative is the benefit and the salvation of mankind (ch. vii. 17, 24, 38; viii. 12, 31, 32, 51; x. 9, 28; xi. 9, 40; xii. 25, 35; xiii. 14, 15, 34, 35; xiv. 3, 16, 17, 27; xv. 6, 7, 16, 20, 21; xvi. 1—3, 7—13, 33; xvii. 17, 26).

It is conceded that this is the prevailing tone of the Fourth Gospel, but the question arises whether the same features are absent from the synoptic Gospels. We ought never to forget that we owe to the synoptists the record of the supernatural birth of Jesus. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. The power of the Highest, the Holy Spirit, is the occasion of his introduction into this world (Matt. i. 18, 20; Luke i. 26—38). One of the most characteristic features of the Johannine teaching, almost more Johannine than any solitary utterances of the Fourth Gospel, is to be found in Matt. xi. 25—28, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes. Yea, Father: for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And take the parallel expression in Luke x. 21, 22, where the chief difference is "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said." The relation between the Father, as Lord of heaven and earth, and the Son is unique. No human mind knows the Father as he does; no prophet, no forerunner, no disciple, knows him as the Father does. It is through his own revelation of the Father that any man will ever know the Father. It is by coming to him for this revelation that they will find rest for their souls. Over this entire conception of himself as the revealing Son Jesus rejoices in the Holy Spirit, and the representation culminates in the peculiarly Johannine conception of "coming" to himself for rest and life.

The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke alike assert the Divine Paternity of Christ. They also record the declaration of John the Baptist, that he who was mightier than himself was about to baptize with the Holy Spirit. In the sermon on the mount Christ identifies "righteousness" with "himself" (Matt. v. 10 and 11). The "I say unto you," often repeated, lifts the Speaker above all other teachers (Matt. vii. 21—27). He assumes to have the destinies of the world in his hands, and makes attention to or rejection of his words the conditions of safety or ruin (see Matt. x. 32, 33; xi. 6, 20—24), to say nothing again of vers. 25—37, which are charged with the deepest self-consciousness (cf. Matt. xii. 40—42; xvi. 27). In Matt. xvi. 16 Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is more explicit than the language of Peter given in ch. vi. 69, which the R.T. reads in an altered and abridged form, "Thou art the Holy One of God." We owe to the three synoptists the stupendous scene of the Transfiguration and the voice from heaven, the omission of which in John's Gospel (seeing this apostle was an eye-witness of his majesty) we have endeavoured to explain (see p. civ). When the hosannas of the children are rebuked by the Pharisees, Christ declares, "If these should be silent, the stones would cry out" (Luke xix. 40). The synoptist narratives all alike record the fact that Jesus assumes the right to *forgive sins*, and to do so in the presence of those who entertain a rooted conviction that no one can forgive sins but God only (Matt. ix. 3—8; Luke v. 20—24; Mark ii. 5—12; cf. Luke vii. 48).

The synoptists record the claim of our Lord to be the Bridegroom of the true theocracy, to take the place which Jehovah does in Isaiah, Hosea, and Ezekiel (see Matt. ix. 14, 15, and parallels; Mark ii. 19, 20; Luke v. 34, etc.). Moreover, some of his most striking parables, which compare the kingdom to a marriage of the king's son (Matt. xxii. 1—14; xxv. 1—13), show in undisguised manner that his Person, his mission, his call, his offer of friendship, constitute such a union between heaven and earth, between God and man, as was effected in his incarnation.

The Gospel of Matthew in particular is explicit in representing our Lord as "Son of man," as coming in his glory to "gather his elect from the four winds," etc. (Matt. xvi. 27; xxiv. 30, 31), to judge the quick and dead, and to gather before his tribunal all nations, to determine as "King" their eternal destiny (Matt. xxv. 31—36). "Come unto me" is his synonym for acquittal from self-reproach. "Depart from me" is the verdict of eternal doom. Luke's Gospel records the triumphant vindication of his transcendental and supreme claims to determine the destiny of souls, in his language to the dying robber (Luke xxiii. 39—43). Matthew gives the most complete assertion of his claim to be "the Son of the living God," and to have "all power in heaven and earth" (Matt. xxvi. 63—66; xxviii. 18—20).

Perplexing and baffling as the Fourth Gospel would be without the facts and testimonies of the synoptists, it seems to us that the synoptists themselves would be equally difficult to understand without such further testimony to the supreme claims of our Lord as are found in the Fourth Gospel. The narratives of the synoptists would be more difficult to faith than they are if we had been left to frame any hypothesis we pleased as to the manner of the *Man* whom winds and seas obeyed; who asserted his purpose to judge mankind; who claimed to forgive sin, and to be eternally omnipresent in the subsequent history of his Church; who assumed a place in the very Godhead itself, by issuing the baptismal formula; whom angels and devils worshipped as the Holy One; before whom wild beasts shrank abashed (Mark i. 13); who represents himself as occupying a higher place in the theocracy than Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, or Elijah, than the temple or the sabbath; who walked on the sea, healed the leper, and raised the dead; who, after himself suffering the agony of death, was once more clothed with surpassing majesty as the Personal Victor over death; who made known in resurrection of life, and by taking possession of an eternal throne, the new and final idea of man's existence.

If we were discussing the veritable facts concerning the Person of our Lord, we might feel bound here to meet the numerous attempts to belittle or reduce to ordinary dimensions of humanity some or all of these details; but we are not called to do so here and now. We are replying to an objection brought against the Fourth Gospel, based on the different tone of this document in dealing with the Person of our Lord from that found in the synoptists. Our reply is—all that is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel is found in a germinant form, and moreover displayed in the miracles, parables, discourses, and events of the first three Gospels.

(5) *The portraiture of the Fourth Gospel.* There are certain individuals whose features are sketched in the Fourth Gospel, but concerning whom the synoptists are silent. For instance, *Nathanael's* name occurs in the first and twenty-first chapters of John, and a stroke or two of vivid soul-revelation are supplied. There is, however, little difficulty in believing that he is none other than the *Bartholomew* of the synoptic account, "one of the twelve," brought in the lists of the apostles into juxtaposition with Philip and Thomas. As such Nathanael appears in the Fourth Gospel. The word *Bar-Tolmai* is a mere patronymic, and no true name, and the identification of the names need occasion no difficulty.

*Nicodemus*, a Jerusalem magnate, a secret disciple, and one who is introduced three times in the narrative (ch. iii. 1; vii. 50; xix. 39), is a feature of Christ's social relations which is not without difficulty. There are, however, several considerations which deserve attention. The synoptists represent Jesus, as the legitimate heir to the throne of David, as on visiting terms with the wealthy Galilean Pharisees (Luke vii. 36), as having a secret friend in the person of Joseph of Arimathea (Luke xxii. 51; cf. ch. xix. 38), and a welcome at the house of "the chief among the publicans" (Luke xix. 2). Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, must not be forgotten (Luke viii. 3), nor the reverence manifested towards him by the Roman centurion of Capernaum (Luke vii.; Matt. viii.).

Even taking the synoptist authorities *alone*, we see that events and friendships parallel and equivalent to those with reference to Nicodemus are not lacking. We have already observed that, while the synoptists are not ignorant of the visits to Jerusalem, they do not lay themselves out for any description or recital of the conversations and miracles which took place there. They naturally pass over Nicodemus, the principal reference to whom occurs in a period of our Lord's ministry concerning which they are perfectly silent.

The *woman of Samaria* comes, as to place and time, into the same category with Nicodemus, and the lifelike portraiture given of her can scarcely be transcended by any narrative in the New Testament. This kindness and sympathy with the Samaritans is, however, the probable basis of the interesting references to the Samaritans in Luke's Gospel and the Acts (Luke ix. 52—56; x. 33; xvii. 16; Acts i. 9; viii. 5, etc.). We do not disguise the difficulty involved in Matt. x. 5, but the experimental mission of the twelve was obviously restricted. They were not to go to cities of the Samaritans, nor into the way of the Gentiles; yet the synoptists (all three) tell us that he himself did go into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, to Cæsarea Philippi and Decapolis. Consequently, the warning of the twelve, in their *first trial journey*, against the cities of the Samaritans may have been equally compatible with what John tells us about his own visit to Samaria.

It cannot be maintained that the story of Lazarus and his sisters introduces novel matter, as Luke has already introduced us to "Martha and Mary," and the representation he gave of the contrast between them, of eager service and quiet meditation, is exquisitely unfolded in the home of Bethany as portrayed by John. The moral features of the two sisters correspond in a most remarkable way with the characteristics of Peter and John, both alike loving and beloved of their Lord. Some critics have gone so far as to suggest that the Lazarus of ch. xi. is a dramatic representation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. No two sets of facts could be much more dissimilar, except it be that the language of Abraham ("If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead") finds a kind of parallel in the fact that the Lazarus who *was* raised from the dead did not convince the heads of the priesthood that Jesus was the Christ. But the record of this great event is found, like the narrative of Nicodemus, that of the impotent man, and that of the blind man, in the Jerusalem ministry. When John takes his reader in the sixth chapter into *Galilee*, he at once confirms the three synoptists by detailing two great miracles which they had already described, but in connection with discourses of immense impressiveness which they had failed to record.

The few characters to which the fourth evangelist makes *exclusive* reference are by no means numerous, nor are they more important than those which are severally peculiar to Matthew and Luke. Thus Matthew alone tells us of "the Wise Men;" and Luke of "the shepherds," of "Simeon," and of "Anna." Matthew and Mark tell us of the "leper;" and Luke only of the "widow of Nain." Matthew, of the mission of the *twelve*; and Luke, of the mission of the *seventy* disciples. Matthew draws with startling clearness the portraiture of Herod the Great. Luke refers to Zacchæus. To each synoptist-evangelist, therefore, we owe special characteristics and portraits of individuals which are scarcely more peculiar or unique than those which are peculiar to John.

Other portraits of the Fourth Gospel correspond in a very impressive way with those of the synoptic Gospels. Where these portraits differ in some striking feature, the ground of the difference is not far to seek.

(a) The treatment of the person of *the mother of our Lord* provides one illustration. Brevity and reticence characterize all that is said in any of these documents concerning the life or death of Mary the virgin-mother. A few scattered notices, all charged with suggestion which might lead astray, and which have left room for extraordinary development both legendary and dogmatic, contain all that we know. Her house and lineage as the betrothed and espoused wife of the last heir of the throne and family of David are declared at length. It is not improbable that both the genealogies are those of Mary as well as of Joseph, but this cannot be positively proved. The story of the miraculous conception as given in Matthew is enriched with several interesting details by Luke, which make evident Mary's holy submission to her mysterious destiny, her purely Old Testament piety and anticipations, and her acquaintance with the great pro-



totypes of the earlier history of her race. The visit of Elisabeth to her, the marvellous accompaniments of her Child's birth, the visit of the shepherds, the song of the angels, and the pondering by Mary over these mysterious events, are recorded by Luke. The providential deliverance of the young Child and his mother from the jealous madness of Herod is preserved by Matthew, while Luke adds the appearance in the temple when Simeon forewarns her that a sword should pierce her own heart. We further discover her maternal solicitude, the obedience she claimed and received up to a certain point and no further. The one incident recorded during the thirty years implies on her part (it may be) some carelessness and failure of apprehension of the wondrous charge entrusted to her. Sorrowing and anxious, she and Joseph receive a word which, like a sword, pierced her. There were depths in her Son's consciousness which she could not fathom, and there was an inward voice he heard, but which she could not hear. A solitary event subsequently recorded, and by Mark only in its fulness, which shows that the Pharisees had, by a diabolic plot which they hatched to shut up Jesus as one "beside himself," endeavoured to make the mother and brethren parties to it. The way in which Christ baffled this design, and even emancipated himself from the control of mother and brethren, is highly significant (Mark iii. 20, 30—35).

After this Mary appears to have followed him on his last visit to Jerusalem, and to have stood by him when in his death-agony. After the Resurrection she is (in Luke's continuation of his Gospel) mentioned once only, and then as being present in the upper chamber. Not another syllable bearing upon her character or even existence can be found in the New Testament or early Christian literature. Neither St. Paul, St. Peter, nor St. John, neither St. James nor St. Jude who may have been her own children, make the faintest reference to her.

It is open to question whether she is obscurely referred to in the Apocalypse (xii. 1—6). We dare not lift the veil, nor do we appeal to the apocryphal gospels. All that we may reasonably infer is her self-repression, her Old Testament standpoint, her desire for the honour of her Son, and some doubtfully placed measures taken for his safety. Her belief in his resurrection, and her association after the Resurrection with the twelve apostles and the brethren. The gentle, holy, retiring spirit hides itself in the glory of her Son and Lord.

The fourth evangelist, who clearly speaks of himself as the beloved disciple, who has never once mentioned his own name nor that of his own mother, never breathes the name of "Mary," and folds her memory in the perfumed cerements of a holy charge he received from his dying Lord. He states firmly that her home was in his house. He becomes her protector and keeper to the end. Where that took place he does not say; but the very fact that he should have received the charge at the cross, confirms a statement made by St. Luke (Acts i. 14). This visit to Jerusalem was full of interest to the other and older tradition. The Fourth Gospel simply shows how this event brought its author into closest relation with the blessed virgin-mother of the Lord. Yet with one exception he adds nothing to what we know, and with reverent silence he passes over details already widely current for a generation before he wrote his Gospel. Still, in mentioning the mother at all, he clears himself from all docetic, Cerinthian, or Marcionite teachings. The author, by the underlying presupposition of the entire Gospel, viz. that Jesus was "the Word made flesh," and by his repeated attempt to illustrate Christ's consciousness of having "come down from heaven," and being essentially "the Son of God," not "born again," but "sent from God," originally and fundamentally "born of the Spirit," coincides with, if he does not give the deepest explanation of the immaculate conception. It is very startling that the one thing he positively mentions is the scene at Cana, where the Lord indicated his freedom from the maternal yoke, his refusal to claim Messianic dignity in the manner indicated by her, and yet along other lines, in answer to her considerate appeal, lavishes love upon her friends, showing forth the glory of his love even more than that of his power.

In ch. vi. 42, by the phrase, "whose father and mother we know," the author of the Fourth Gospel reveals the fact of current belief in Christ's human parentage, and also of the change of abode made by the *family* of Jesus from Nazareth to Capernaum (ch. ii. 12).

Such subtle harmonies of thought convince us that the author was familiar with the same unique Personage, and was delineating the same character.

(b) The synoptic and Johannine portraiture of *John the Baptist* unquestionably differ, but the points of divergence are conspicuously due to the circumstance that the synoptists virtually close their account of John with the baptism of Jesus. The fourth evangelist commences his account of the "man sent from God" after that prophet had come into contact with the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. A question has often been asked whether one who could have delivered such a testimony concerning Christ as that which is preserved in ch. iii. 27, etc., could, as the synoptists assert, have sent from the prison the inquiry, "Art thou the coming One, or may we look for another?" The question has been melted down into a very moderate amount of anxiety by some apologists, and exaggerated into irreconcilable contradiction by the opponents of the Fourth Gospel. The middle course is the more rational. The full coming of the Christ is so variously estimated by the Jewish schools, that some believed in a twofold coming—that of a tender plant out of a dry ground, and that of a Sun and King of Righteousness. Some anticipated a son of woman and also a Son of God, the coming of a suffering and also of a triumphant Messiah. The prophecies were then and are now difficult to disentangle. Is the holder of the sceptre the same as the "Prophet" who should come into the world? Is the "David" and the "Melchizedek" the same predicted manifestation? Is there more than one coming? is there more than one kind of revelation? The query, "Art thou he that should come?" (*ὁ ἐρχόμενος*), may have reasonably meant, "Granting that thou art the suffering 'Lamb of God,' the Son of the Father, the Bridegroom of the Church, art thou the final manifestation, seeing that thou art continually withdrawing from the asseveration of thy Messiahship? Like myself, art thou only a forerunner of the conquering Prince who is mightier than either of us?" ("Do we look for another?") This inquiry may have been built on the purely Old Testament standpoint on which the great forerunner took his stand. It was difficult, if not impossible, for him to discard the transitional rôle which he had been commissioned to fulfil. He would, like Judaism or Hebraism itself, have never accomplished the work assigned to him, if he had not held to it with a tenacity which was really superfluous after his preparatory work had reached its climax. Great as the testimonies of John were, as seen and recorded in the Fourth Gospel, yet Christ says (ch. v. 36), "I have greater witness than that of John." This subject is discussed in the author's '*John the Baptist*,' pp. 419—449.

(c) The character of *Simon Peter* is marvellously consistent as recorded in the synoptists. The "Peter" of Mark and Luke is a study of courage and weakness, of generous impulses and eager self-assertion, and of a rocklike energy, which nevertheless shivers and is pulverized by the onset of doubt. From first to last he is ready to take matters into his own hands and criticize and even remonstrate with the Lord, to suggest almost childlike proposals which the Lord was compelled to reject. He is humble under rebuke, and impulsively makes some fresh suggestion equally wide of the mark. The very earliest account of Simon strikes the key-note of the delineation. When amazed at the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 8), he cries impetuously, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." The spirit was right, but the expression of it was directly adverse to the whole mystery of Divine love. On the mount of Transfiguration (Luke ix. 33 and parallels) he made the vague suggestion, "Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, one for Elijah," hurrying to a conclusion utterly beyond and aside the display he had just received of the Lord's inherent majesty. The "decease to be accomplished" suggested to him as yet no clear idea. When multitudes of the disciples walked no more with their Master, and vague and conflicting rumours were passing between lip and lip, Simon, son of Jona (or John) gave utterance to a confession of transcendent importance upon which the Church has been built, and against which the gates of hell will not prevail; but when, upon the faith of this Divine conviction, Jesus proceeded to explain the tragic issues of his present mission, Peter could not count upon the wisdom or truth of "the Son of the living God" and began to rebuke the very Christ, and to say (Matt. xvi. 22), "That be far from thee." Then Peter soon finds that his wisdom was not the measure of the ways of God. Simon Peter must have been by analogy the spokesman of the eleven who were anxious to second the wish of the multitudes to make Jesus by force into their king, and whom Jesus "constrained" to get into the boat and depart from the scene of 'his great miracle' (cf. Mark vi. 45 with ch. vi. 15). While the other disciples cried out

for fear at the apparition of Jesus walking on the sea, Peter, forerunning his Master, cried with most insufficient self-knowledge (Matt. xiv. 28), "If it be thou, bid me come to thee upon the water," the permission rather than the command (ἐλάθε) led him to demonstrate that his little faith was soon the occasion of bewildering doubt.

When Jesus warned all his disciples that they would be offended at him (Matt. xxvi. 31—35), eleven receive at first the rebuke in humble silence; Peter, with habitual boldness, virtually exclaims, "Thou art not right this time, O my Master. Though all men should be offended at thee, yet will I never be offended; though all men deny thee, though I should die with thee, I will not by any means deny thee" (vers. 33—35). On the way to the garden of Gethsemane he thought and suggested that two swords would be of service against the Roman guard, and in the *mêlée* at the entrance of the garden one of the disciples (the synoptists do not say which of them) drew a sword (Luke xxii. 50 and parallels), and smote off the ear of the servant of the high priest, only to receive the solemn rebuke of Jesus. While other disciples fled, Simon Peter followed to the door of the high priest's palace (Luke xxii. 54), but, having entered it, he could not bear, alas! the first charge or insinuation that he was one of the disciples of the insulted and condemned Master, and he added oaths and curses to his base denial (Mark xiv. 70, 71). All the synoptists indicate that his contrition was almost as sudden as his fall. After the Resurrection (while John stood trembling at the entrance of the sepulchre), Peter (Luke xxiv. 12) went hurriedly into it, to search for the wounded corpse of the Master whom he had so basely deserted.

The Evangelist Luke carries forward the story of the Apostle Peter's splendid courage on Pentecost, of his ready insight, of his eagerness to be the mouthpiece of his fellow-disciples (Acts ii.), and then to speak for John as well as for himself (Acts iii. and iv.). His prominence in the scenes with Ananias and Simon Magus all show the same impetuous energy, but the history reveals the same curious blending of somewhat contradictory elements; e.g. Peter's reply to the heavenly voice, "Rise, Peter, slay and eat," is eminently characteristic: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." His language to the Sanhedrin, to Ananias, to Simon Magus, to Æneas, to Cornelius, is curiously in harmony with all that we know of the noblest part of his character; but the energy with which "Peter continued knocking" in the dead of night at the door of Mark's house was enough to have brought the whole quaternion of soldiers after him; and his ready obedience to the will of God at Cæsarea and at Jerusalem in the matter of the circumcision of Gentile Christians, and of social intercourse with them, reflects the generous and gracious side of his character, open to new ideas and surrounding influences. "Who am I that I should withstand God?" Facts are stronger than fictions and old prejudices. Nevertheless, St. Paul's account of Peter's conduct at Antioch (Gal. ii.) draws in a sentence a portrait of the same deeply marked character. "When certain from James arrived, Peter withdrew and separated himself, and refused to eat with the Gentiles, fearing them of the circumcision."

Even tradition tells us that Peter fled from Rome in the midst of the Neronian persecution, and, seeing a vision of the Lord apparently making his way towards the city, was ready with his characteristic question, "Domine, quo vadis?" And the last thing recorded of him is equally so. He refused to be crucified after the manner of his Lord, but besought to be impaled with his head downwards. Such a marked individuality is one of the most striking notes of accuracy. There is nothing exactly like it in any other portion of the biblical history. Does the author of the Fourth Gospel reflect the same general characteristic in his representation of St. Peter? If he had given us another Peter, a mystical conception, a fancy portrait to fill out some theological theory, if he had shown himself ignorant of these numerous attested peculiarities, the pressure of the argument against the historicity of the narrative would have been strong. But, on the contrary, the fourth evangelist records the earliest conference upon Peter of the name of Cephias, and a brief citation of Peter's great confession (ch. vi. 68—70), "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; we have believed and we have come to know that thou art the Son of the living God [or, 'thou art the Holy One of God'];" but when we come to the Last Supper (ch. xiii. 6—11), the composite nature of Peter is touched off with a characteristic scene. The Lord prepares to wash his disciples' feet. St. Peter says, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," and repeats it after remonstrance; but he

no sooner grasps the meaning, as he thinks, than he gives his Lord some further suggestions: "Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." There is the same hurry and impulsiveness, the same blundering forward into rebuke and fresh light. After this, Peter, irrepressible as ever, suggests to the beloved disciple to inquire who was the traitor, and thus he would again forestall his Lord. We have the same shade of character once more, hinted in the eager inquiry, "Whither goest thou?" and "Why cannot I follow thee now?" "I will lay down my life for thy sake" (ch. xiii. 36—38). The eager acts of the night of the Passion are preserved in the Fourth Gospel, and they reveal the need, both of reproof and miracle, to obviate evil consequences (ch. xviii. 10, 11). The unnamed disciple who had smitten the servant of the high priest is declared by John to be none other than Simon Peter. This is given with no intent to humble Peter, but rather to exalt his courage. The features of the temptation and the fall of Peter are abundantly explained (ch. xviii. 15—18, 25—27). The haste of Peter to rush into the sepulchre is specially noted in the Fourth Gospel, and the most characteristic of all these scenes completes John's portraiture. Peter distinguishes himself (ch. xxi. 7, etc.) by the special desire to plunge into the sea to reach his Lord, and to draw the net to shore. When interrogated by the Lord as to the intensity of his personal love, Peter at length shows impatience as well as grief (see ver. 17). He would, even in his last word, give the Lord some advice as to the revelations it would be wise for him to make. Such a unique combination of tendencies and methods as are presented by the New Testament generally must represent an historical character of great individuality. The Fourth Gospel, in all its references to Peter, though for the most part involving a separate group of occurrences, is in minute and impressive harmony with the synoptic and Pauline portraiture. In no case are these utterances and acts of Peter more than silhouettes of his Personality, but the dullest student of analogy cannot fail to feel the identity of the character. Nor are the Tübingen writers or Renan altogether just when they endeavour to draw from the references to Peter an animus against him on the part of the author of the Fourth Gospel. On the contrary, these references are more sympathetic by far than the records of corresponding scenes in the synoptic narrative.

(d) The characters of *Caiaphas and Pilate* are drawn with tolerable clearness in the synoptists, although they scarcely do more than bring them into the searching light of the Divine presence of the Lord Jesus. Luke tells us (iii. 1, 2) that the one was priest and the other was the Roman representative (*ἡγεμονεύωντος*) in Judæa, and we are reminded also by Luke of Pilate's hatred of the religion of the people over whom he ruled, as well as his cruelty to Galilæans who had properly belonged to the hegemony of Herod Antipas (Luke xiii. 1).

Caiaphas in the synoptic narrative is the president of the court before which Jesus is tried, and we discern his hatred of his Victim, his anxiety to secure even valueless testimony against Jesus, rather than none at all; and to obtain, moreover, a kind of testimony which would not turn the hearts of the excitable Pharisaic party to take his side. His eagerness to condemn, to call forth an answer which should, according to his understanding and exposition of the Law incriminate Jesus; and the impetuous haste with which he fastened a charge of blasphemy on the Lord, are among the most tragic features of the trial.

Caiaphas knew that the Messiah was "the Son of the Blessed" (Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61) and "the Son of God." Yet the one thing that in his judgment and that of his court was a capital offence was the calm claim on the part of Jesus to be all that was involved in this great Name. It was the confession of the Lord himself that constituted the gravamen of the charge. The charge, however, which the priests brought before Pilate was that Jesus was stirring up the people, and forbidding them to pay tribute to Cæsar, and was making himself a King (Luke xxiii. 2). Thus Caiaphas was bending his own feigned loyalty to Roman power into the instrument of his theological hatred, into the tool of his jealousy towards a spiritual power which he could not rival and had not the power to extinguish. So pertinacious was the priestly clique, that when Pilate sent the mysterious Prisoner to Herod, anxious to be rid of so troublesome a case, the rabble of priests rushed after him to Herod's court, and "vigorously accused him (*εὐθὺς κατηγοροῦντες*)" (Luke xxiii. 11). The Barabbas incident is (Mark xv. 11) clearly the low and unscrupulous scheme of the Caiaphas party (*οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς ἀνέσταν τὸν ὄχλον*).

Now, though the fourth evangelist does not describe the scene before Caiaphas as given in the synoptists, he *implies* that the court *had come* to a pseudo-decision, and had taken legal action (ch. xviii. 35), had "*delivered*" Jesus to the Roman power, that it might execute the ecclesiastical verdict. Moreover, there is one remarkable sentence in the Fourth Gospel which sketches the character of Caiaphas with entire accuracy. The council of the Jews was in great trepidation lest the Romans would come and take away their place and nation, their personal and corporate authority. Caiaphas used their alarm to propound the heartless and unjust doctrine: "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not" (ch. xi. 49, 50). Let them put Jesus to death on a false charge, and save themselves. "It was a happy chance that they could seem to vindicate their loyalty while they gratified their hatred" (Westcott, 'Introd.' lxxii.). Caiaphas knew his own mind thoroughly, and carried it through remorselessly. He instigated and executed the tragic suit. John shows the spiritual obtuseness, the stone-blindness and religious fanaticism out of which the whole proceeding sprang. The character of Caiaphas becomes far more explicable from the key to it which is thus supplied by the Fourth Gospel.

The portraiture of Pilate himself is fully given by the synoptists and the fourth evangelist; and, though the portrait is drawn in different materials, yet it is the same personage, and the particulars have a lifelike force which Renan and other hostile critics are candid enough to admit. In both series of events there is the same irresolution and perplexity, the same desire to save the life of Jesus, if he could contrive it without injury to himself. There is the same desire as long as he dared to worry and trample on the people and priests whom he bitterly hated. John gives an instance (xviii. 31) in which Pilate banter the leaders of the accusation with a scoffing permission to judge the Prisoner by their own Law, and draws out from them their humiliating confession that they had no legal or admitted right to execute a man, nor did they want to risk the possible unpopularity of such a step. The synoptists all show that Pilate saw in a moment through the hollowness of the charge. A humiliated Victim of priestly malice could not, as a Jewish prince, occasion the smallest danger to the Roman state, and the mere silence of Jesus before such a charge greatly puzzled the governor. John, however, does more: he shows that Jesus, in a private audience, had confessed that he was King; but that the words "king" and "kingdom" were used in no secular or temporal sense, that he was utterly without avowed support, and that he desired for his subjects only those who were loyal to heavenly truth. Luke gives the characteristic transmission of Jesus to the jurisdiction of Herod; and Matthew gives the message of Pilate's wife. Mark, with great particularity, details the demands of the people for a prisoner's pardon, which Pilate—as a drowning man clutches at a straw—tried to use for the moment on behalf of Jesus. We see even from the hand-washing (described by Matthew) that Pilate's irresolution was partly due to some sense of unseen powers, some spice of superstition in his nature, and a Roman soldier's unwillingness to do a base thing by power of his office as a governor. John gives a more subtle key in the certain spell which Christ had cast over him by declaring that he which had delivered the Heaven-sent King to his own secular court had committed "the greater sin." Our Gospel, however, as well as the synoptics, reveals the revolting weakness of the man, that he should have repeatedly admitted the innocence of Jesus, and yet have scourged him, and even allowed the most cruel indignities to be offered to One whom he knew to be blameless. He tried, indeed, to make capital in the favour of Christ from the absolute contrast between the Jewish charge and the condition to which "the just Man" had been reduced. John gives the truest explanation of the final capitulation of Pilate, entirely characteristic of his nature: "If thou let this man go, thou art no friend to Cæsar," and "We have no king but Cæsar." Here was an argument which he could not resist. He knew these rebellious Jews were lying in their teeth while they ostentatiously descended to the lowest depths of national apostasy. He yielded to a clamour that might cost him his life if he were to disregard it any longer. *Certainly Christ died for Pilate.* But quite in harmony with the curious composite passions of the moment, the Fourth Gospel emphasizes Pilate's words, which he meant to be biting satire: "Your King;" "your King." The four Gospels are unanimous in the main terms of the accusation written over the cross, "**KING OF**

THE JEWS." It was thus in all the narratives—Matthew especially emphasizes it—that we see how Pilate chuckled over the satire which took the edge off the pleasure which the priestly party found as they gloated over their vile revenge. We have the same Pilate in all four Gospels, and the materials in which John perpetuates his portrait, though differently chosen, are consistent with the synoptic delineation. Nay, additional light is thus cast upon the entire transaction, and the historic outline of Pilate's figure more deeply etched.

C. *Answer to some objections based on special discrepancies between the synoptists and John.*

1. Thus Holtzmann ('Einleitung,' p. 429, etc.) refers to the exaggeration in the supernatural elements of the Fourth Gospel; e.g. the transformation of water into wine; the impotent man had been *thirty* years in that state; the blind man had been blind *from his birth*; and Lazarus had been dead, buried, and might have been putrid, before his resurrection; he walks on the sea of Galilee, and is not taken into the *boat*; the nobleman's son is healed from a distance.

These peculiarities are more apparent than real. The transformation of water into wine finds its parallel in the creative multiplication of the bread. The walking on the sea is not more wonderful than the hushing of the storm; while the healing of leprosy (the incurable disease, and type of the consequences of sin, and the image of death in the Mosaic ritual), is omitted by the Fourth Gospel. The thirty years of the impotent man in ch. v. is paralleled by the woman who had been crippled for *eighteen* years (Luke xiii. 11). The healing from a distance in ch. iv. 52, etc., finds its exact counterpart in Matt. viii. 5—13. The gathering and growing significance of the resurrection of Lazarus after he had lain in his grave is not denied; but Luke's narrative of the young man carried out to his burial is more memorable and startling than Matthew's narrative of the resurrection of the maiden daughter of Jairus. There is an affluence of material at the disposal of the earliest tradition out of which this writer has made judicious selection, and from obvious reasons that these particular events proved the *occasion and text* of very special and related discourse. It is more than evident that the Fourth Gospel, though the latest of the narratives, is not the most profuse, nor the most imposing in its enumeration of miracles, and is the one Gospel in which supernatural events are regarded as constituting a *lower kind of evidence* than the unsustained words of Christ (ch. xiv. 11, 12). In this connection, the omission of the Transfiguration and of the great outbursts of healing power, which are recorded in the synoptic Gospels, deserves special consideration. Moreover, the miraculous accompaniments of events common to the synoptic and Johannine narrative are positively shorn in the latter of some of their supernatural features; e.g. the current report of the baptism of Jesus is corrected (see p. xcvi., and notes) by a representation which places the miracle in the consciousness of John the Baptist. The stupendous portents attending the Crucifixion are limited to the fulfilment of prophecy in the parting of the garments and in the piercing of the side of Jesus.

2. The synoptists are said to differ from the fourth evangelist in representing the continuous human development of the plan of Jesus, if not of his character and self-consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Davidson considers that very grave objections may be taken to Schenkel's method of establishing this contrariety to the Fourth Gospel. The numerous writers (e.g. Hase, Renan) who have repeated the same objection overstate the stages of development as visible in the first three Gospels. The Third Gospel (Luke iv. 16—30) sets forth that, at the commencement of his ministry, Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, inaugurated the Messianic kingdom, and declared that Isa. lxi. was fulfilled in his own Person. Mark represents him, *at the beginning of his ministry*, as hailed by the dæmoniacks who knew him as "the Holy One of God," as curing leprosy by his touch, and claiming the right to forgive sins. He indicates the period—one far earlier than most harmonists find it convenient to place the sermon on the mount (Mark i. 22)—when he must, according to Matt. v.—vii., have identified his own cause with that of "righteousness," assumed a position parallel to that of Moses, discriminated himself from the sinful human race, and declared that he had the destinies of the entire world in his hands.

There is not much more room for *development* after that! Abundant indication is

<sup>1</sup> Schenkel, 'Character of Jesus,' § ii.; but throughout the volume reiterated.

supplied by the synoptists that Jesus was, by some of his hearers, more clearly apprehended as the months rolled on, but at the first he was hailed from heaven as "the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased." There is scarcely anything more explicit, more allied to the crown of imperial majesty, than this. To get rid of the force of it the whole conception of John's baptism of Jesus has to be explained away (see Schenkel, *loc. cit.*, pp. 44—47, where the testimonies of the Baptist, as given in the Fourth Gospel, are but "forms of later ideas"). The important fact is that the vision of John and Jesus, as given in the synoptic Gospels, is practically identical with the testimonies which, according to the Fourth Gospel, many days later were borne by John the Baptist to Jesus (ch. iii. 27, etc.).

We are not disposed in the least to question that there must have been development in the soul of Jesus from his childhood to his boyhood, from twelve years old to thirty. But Jesus did not wait for the dæmoniacs or the multitude to tell him that he was the King of the new kingdom. So great a nature as his was not governed by Hillel or Gamaliel, by Essene or Rabban, by Sadducee or Pharisee. The immense originality of Jesus, as at the very first displayed in the synoptic narrative, showed how far his consciousness of mission and origin had gone. "*Sonship*, as an element of Messiahship, grew and deepened with time," says Dr. Davidson. The element of time, if we take even the longer chronology of John, is almost a vanishing factor in the exhibition of the character of Jesus. He had reached his maturity when he appeared as a candidate for John's baptism. His mind was made up with reference to what was involved in the rôle of Messiah, both as a Son and as a Sufferer, as a Prophet and as a King. He did not wait for circumstances to reveal him to himself. But the stages of some kind of evolution and revelation of his nature, conditioned, so far as his hearers were concerned, by their susceptibility to his teaching, are not absent from the Fourth Gospel. Thus compare the teaching bestowed upon the woman of Samaria with that to the leaders of religious thought in Jerusalem (ch. v.); *e.g.* compare the elementary ideas of the spirituality of "God" and of "worship," and the power of Jesus to give the water of life, with the grounds on which, as the Son of God, he was able to follow the leading and do the will of the Father in works of mercy. Add to this the growing revelation of himself as Life, Light, and Love, from ch. v. to ch. xi. In this respect, also, compare the teaching bestowed on the different groups of disputants in ch. vii. and ch. viii. with the more explicit and abundant revelations of his character, functions, and work as the Shepherd of the sheep, and his unity with the Father (ch. x.). Almost all shades of modern criticism admit the impressive change in manner and teaching inaugurated in ch. xiii., after he had retired from the temple, and, with his beloved ones around him, proceeded to reveal the way to the Father, the imminence of his departure, the certainty of his mystic presence, the mission of the Comforter, and the oneness of his Church. So far as progress is concerned in the self-revelation of the Lord, the records of our Gospel are as explicit and marked as those of the synoptic Gospels. We are ready to concede a different level of instructions and a class of teaching better adapted to individuals than to multitudes, more suited to the midnight auditor, or to the solitary waif at a wayside well, or to the knots of perturbed ecclesiastics, or to the family at Bethany, than to the ordinary synagogue life or the miscellaneous crowds on the hills of Galilee.

The synoptic Gospels, if they are left to tell their own story, and are not torn to pieces in order to secure a chronological arrangement in harmony with a preconceived theory, disclose, as the Fourth Gospel does, that the mind of the Lord was mature and made up from the first, and that the apparent progress is due to the increasing sensitiveness and susceptibility of the hearers of his wondrous words.

3. The presence of Alexandrine and Gnostic ideas is supposed to dominate the Gospel, and thus to discriminate it from the synoptic narrative to the disadvantage of its genuineness. In dealing with the sources and language of the Gospel, with its platform and antecedents, we have seen what ground there is for accepting a certain method or style of representation more prevalent in Ephesus than in Jerusalem, in Rome or Alexandria than in the Palestinian schools, and also the limitations to which this explanation is submitted, and the indications of the eye-witness that strike through the whole web like silver threads. It is desirable in this place merely to call attention to the exaggerations of criticism in this behalf. Attention has been already called to the presence, in Matt. xi. 27, 28, and Luke x. 21, 22, of phraseology which is identical

in tone and suggestion with that which occurs in the Fourth Gospel. This single textual fact is sufficient to dispose of large part of the allegation.

It has been said, "Instead of saying that God *created* the world, as the synoptists do, a kingdom of darkness exists from the beginning under the dominion of the prince of this world. This being is hostile to God; he is the devil, Satan, the wicked one. Because of his essential opposition to God, he is connected with matter." It is unfortunate that no passage from either of the synoptists is forthcoming in vindication of this contrast. In Mark x. 6 Jesus speaks of the "making" of men male and female at the beginning of the creation (*ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως*). The connection and the reference to Gen. i. 27 show that there is no dogmatic assertion of the creation out of nothing, even there. We are told that "all things (*ἐγένετο*) became, came into being, through the Logos." What right has any critic to say that *ἡ ὕλη* ("matter") is excluded from *πάντα*; and that the devil, because of his opposition to God, is connected with *matter*? "Darkness" is not referred to by the author until he has spoken of life, and the Life which is the Light of "*men*." The darkness is not chaotic or a cosmic, but moral, and the antagonism between "light" and "darkness" is not dualistic in the philosophic sense. It is no other than a current platitude of the Old Testament. Gen. i. 2—5: "darkness" is simply the negation of light; in Ps. xviii. 28 it is the symbol of sorrow; Ps. xci. 6, the physical region where the unknown causes of evil dwell (Ps. cxii. 4; Isa. lviii. 10; and cf. Luke i. 79 and Matt. vi. 23, where it represents the moral condition of those whose spiritual vision is bleared or blinded). As to the existence of the devil, or Satan, the synoptists have more to say than the Fourth Gospel, and it is in Matthew's and Luke's account of the temptation of Christ that the relation of the *διδάσκαλος* to the world is most explicitly asserted. "The wicked one," *ὁ πονηρός*, does not in this sense appear in John, unless ch. xvii. 15 be such a reference; but if so, then Matt. v. 37; vi. 13; xiii. 19; xiii. 38; Luke xi. 26, convey the same idea more forcibly. The synoptists describe the kingdom of Beelzebub and Satan as set over against the kingdom of God, and as "standing" because of its inward organization and the obedience and loyalty of its subjects. The Gnostics have made far more use of *this* conception than they have of the Johannine revelations of the father of lies. "Jesus," in the Fourth Gospel, according to Dr. Davidson, "for this reason does not pray for the world, which is incapable of conversion, but for his disciples." Is this conceivably the meaning of John, who puts ch. iii. 16, 17 into the lips of the Lord? cf. ch. i. 29 (John the Baptist); iv. 42 (the Samaritans); vi. 33, 51; viii. 12; xii. 47; xvi. 8; xvii. 21. "Not until the prince of this world is expelled from his kingdom, as the result of Christ's death, shall all men be drawn into the faith and fellowship with the Word." The assault delivered at the might of Satan by the incarnation of Christ, the victorious issue from temptation, and victory over death, is one of the great themes of the New Testament. There is more reason in a supposed Gnostic origin of Luke x. 17—20 than for a solitary reference to the prince of this world in the Fourth Gospel (cf. Heb. ii. 14; Col. ii. 15). A docetic element is attributed to the representation by the Fourth Gospel of the humanity and bodily life of our Lord. The fact is that there is no book in the New Testament which more explicitly demonstrates the physical life and perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus. His father and mother and brothers are spoken of, his weariness and thirst, his tears, his human affections, his dress, his food, his spittle, his touch, his flesh and blood, his bones and wounded side. He is "made flesh;" he dies; his body is embalmed; his garments are divided; and, after his resurrection, he partakes of fish and bread. To say that all this does not alter the case, because in ch. vii. 30; viii. 59; x. 39; and xviii. 6, the docetic view is implied, is very wilful, seeing that these passages all have actual and close parallels in the synoptic Gospels. Hilgenfeld has pressed especially the sympathy of the Fourth Gospel for Valentinianism, and specially finds in ch. viii. 43, 44 the Gnostic idea of the creation of the devil by a god of inferior rank, such as that which the Ophites found in the God of the Jews (see notes); and the reference to the Gnostic idea of "the father of the devil," which appears to us to be a mistranslation, and to introduce elements entirely foreign to the whole teaching of the Gospel. The opposition between the children of God and the children of the devil is manifest in Gospel and Epistle, but the distinction is not based on a primordial difference of essence, but on the different act of the *will*, which leaves the responsibility of being in one or the other category with men, and not either with



fate, God, or the devil (see ch. v. 39, 40, 44, 47; see Godet's admirable discussion, 'Introduction,' vol. i. 182, etc.).

We are here concerned with the relation of the Fourth Gospel to the synoptic three, and cannot do other than come to the conclusion that there is nothing in the contents of the synoptic Gospels to invalidate the historicity of the Fourth Gospel. We shall now proceed to some of the special characteristics of the Gospel which are supposed by some critics to destroy its authenticity as the work of the Apostle John.

4. The style and diction of the evangelist. This is said on all hands to be a good specimen of Hellenistic Greek, and not to be more Hebraistic than other portions of the New Testament, but rather less so<sup>1</sup>—a circumstance which is to be easily accounted for, if we bear in mind the apostle's long residence in a Greek-speaking province, and his familiarity with Gentiles as well as Jews in Patmos, Ephesus, and possibly Rome. Those peculiarities to which some critics appeal as indicating contrast between the diction of Christ as recorded by John and that attributed to him by the synoptists, are extremely few and unimpressive. The mere fact that John should use in his own narrative, or put into the lips of various interlocutors, certain words and phrases, is nothing more than to say that this most remarkable author had a moderate amount of individuality—that he had a certain style of his own. Thus that he should use such words as *ἄνθρακίς*, *ἔνταλμα*, *ἀποσυνάγωγος*, *βιβρώσκειν*, *γλωσσόκομον*, *δακρύνει*, *δίδυμος*, *ἐγκαίνια*, *ἐπιχρίνει*, *θήκη*, *θρέμματα*, *κέρμα*, *κολυμβήθρα*, *μονογενής*, *νιπτήρ*, *ὄζειν*, *προβατική*, *προσαίτης*, and many others only resembles what may be stated of almost every book of the New Testament. The vocabulary of the evangelist is small, and the same expressions are repeated with great frequency. *Φῶς* occurs twenty-three times; *δέξα*, *δοξάζεσθαι*, forty-two times; *ζῶή*, *ζῆν*, fifty-two times; *μαρτυρία*, *μαρτυρεῖν*, forty-seven times; *γινώσκειν*, fifty-five times; *κόσμος*, seventy-eight times; *πιστεύειν*, ninety-eight times; *ἔργον*, twenty-three times; *ὄνομα* and *ἀληθεία*, twenty-five times; *σημεῖον*, seventeen. These words are found, from their varied position and context, to have special connotation, and to grow in significance as we pass from the prologue to the epilogue. That we should find *μέντοι* six times, though not used in other Gospels; that *οὐν* should be used as a connective particle far more frequently than in the other Gospels; that *μέν* should almost be dropped out of use; that *καί* should be used where we might expect *δέ*; that he should be so often content to bring opposing statements into simple juxtaposition, leaving the conclusion to be felt rather than emphasized by himself (ch. i. 5; xv. 24; iii. 11); that the use of the optative should be discarded, unless in ch. xiii. 24; that *λόγος* should be used in a special sense in the prologue and in the First Epistle; and that a multitude of expressions should be found in the Epistles which also occur in the narrative or reflective portions of the Gospel, all combine to show that, apart from the language put into the lips of our Lord, there is a discoverable dogmatic style adopted by this writer. It is worthy of special note that whereas, e.g., the term *Λόγος* is used by the evangelist when speaking in his own name (not only in the prologue, but in 1 John i. 1 and Rev. xix. 13) of the Lord, yet John was never tempted to put this language into the lips of Jesus. Another expression common to the prologue and First Epistle is "to be born of God." There were many occasions when it would have been easy to have justified the phrase by attributing it to Jesus, but the evangelist avoids the phrase in ch. iii. and elsewhere.

The charge is made that all the interlocutors, John the Baptist and Nicodemus, the woman of Samaria, the Jews and Pilate, alike speak the same Johannine dialect, and that this is also identical with that which is put into the lips of our Lord. Consequently it is inferred that the entire language of the thought which has broken away from the atmosphere and dialect of the synoptists is the invention of the writer. With the phraseology, the *thought* is supposed also to be Johannine, and we are said to be reading a powerful romance rather than a carefully arranged series of biographical fragments. Now, we are ready, nay, compelled, to concede a considerable subjective element in the delineation. The choice of one group of discourses, debates, events, and results, rather than of another, is clearly the work of the evangelist. He himself asserts that the materials at his disposal were far more numerous than those which he has utilized (ch. xx. 30). The Spirit that moved him to this particular choice utilized the specialty of his meditative mind and impulsive love as the means and process of the revelation. We

<sup>1</sup> Winer, 'Grammar of New Testament Greek' (Eng. trans.), p. 35.

must go further, and say that in no case can we suppose that he preserved *totidem verbis* the whole of the discourse or conversations. The interview with Nicodemus lasted longer than five minutes; the debate in the fifth chapter more than ten minutes; the sharp controversies of ch. vi.—x. can only be given in outline. Doubtless the salient points were preserved in each case, the ideas and words that left the deepest impression on the writer's memory were recited; but the putting together of the whole, the brilliant dramatic scenes of chs. vi.—viii., record the gist of lengthened and animated controversy. The sublime converse in the upper chamber must have been curtailed and arranged so as to conserve the vital elements of this unique teaching. No critic can escape from a certain subjective element in the representation. Even if we could unreservedly accept the theory of Hug, Diodati, and Roberts, that our Lord spake the Greek tongue in Galilee, or to Pilate, or when in presence of the Greeks, yet it is difficult to suppose that the Baptist spake Greek, that the conversation with Nicodemus or in the upper chamber was not carried on in the familiar vernacular. In the extent, therefore, that our Lord used Aramaic at all, the evangelist must have translated into his own Hellenistic dialect the Aramaic words. This circumstance is enough to explain a large amount of sameness in the Gospel, even in reporting the ministry and teaching either of John or Jesus. The synoptic Gospels do, without much doubt, reveal the existence of an oral or written Greek nucleus from which, while supplementing it by special details, their authors drew their main material. Now, the writer of this Gospel acted independently of that source, and drew more immediately upon his own special memories and the ideas which he had himself widely diffused by his preaching before he penned the Gospel. The question arises—Is there any distinction to be perceived between the Greek diction used by John in the composition of his Gospel and of his Epistles, and that which, by some sure instinct of reverence and deep memory, he has used when recording the words and discourses of our Lord?

Numerous tables prepared for me by the Rev. William Henry Beckett, of Stebbing, reveal some facts which are worthy of special attention. I regret that I have not space to present them *in extenso*, and hope that he may be induced to publish them, with the important conclusions deducible from them.

List A, as below, shows that more than a hundred and forty-five words are put by the evangelist into the lips of our Lord, but never used by himself; of which thirty-eight are found in the synoptic records of our Lord's words, and of which fourteen are peculiar to the Johannine writings.

List B shows the expansion of the same investigation, where the dominance of a certain phraseology in the words of our Lord is contrasted with the use of the same language by the evangelist elsewhere, in narrative portions and in the Epistles.

List C enumerates the phrases which are peculiar to the utterances of our Lord in the Fourth Gospel. They are nine in number, of which the most remarkable are the reduplicated Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν, which occurs twenty-five times; Ἐγὼ εἰμι six times; Ἐγὼ εἰμι δὲ thirteen times.

List D contains nearly five hundred words (a not inconsiderable vocabulary) which are used by the writer when pursuing his narrative or recording the words of others, not our Lord's, or developing in hortatory form his own personal conceptions of doctrine or duty. Of course, much is necessarily common to the whole diction, but the facts here adduced demonstrate a distinct character in our Lord's speech, which did not pass over into the style of the beloved disciple, and a large element of personal style adopted by himself, which, nevertheless, he never attributed to the Lord. This, I submit, cannot be the result of accident, and is best explained by recognizing the existence of the distinct nucleus of historic and reported speech.

LIST A.—Words found only in discourses and sayings attributed to our Lord by St. John.<sup>1</sup>

ἀγαλλιάω, ch. v. 36; viii. 56.  
ἀγαμέζω, ch. x. 36; xvii. 17, 19;  
used in the Lord's Prayer,  
Matthew and Luke, and in

Matt. xxiii. 18, 19 of the gold  
and the gift; does not occur  
elsewhere in the Gospels.

S. ἀγωνίζομαι, ch. xviii. 36.

<sup>1</sup> The letter J indicates that the word is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel; S, that the word is confined, in the synoptic Gospels, to the language of our Lord.

- J.** ἀθετέω, ch. xii. 48.  
ἀλλαχθέν, ch. x. 1.  
ἀλλομαι, ch. iv. 14.  
ἀλλότριος, ch. x. 5.
- S.** ἔμπελος, ch. xv. 1, 4, 5.
- J.** [ἀναμάρτητος, ch. viii. 7 (of 1 Epist. i. 8—10, where the word might have been used).]  
ἀνὴρ = husband, ch. iv. 16, 17, 18.  
ἀπαρνέομαι, ch. xiii. 38; and ἀρνέομαι, R.T.
- S.** ἄπιστος, ch. xx. 27.  
ἀπόστολος, ch. xiii. 16.  
ἀπώλεια, ch. xvii. 12.  
ἀριστάω, ch. xxi. 12, 15  
ἀρνίου, ch. xxi. 15.  
ἀτιμάζω, ch. viii. 49.
- S.** βάπτω, ch. xiii. 26.  
βασιλεία, ch. iii. 3, 5; xviii. 36.  
βλασφημέω, ch. x. 36.  
βόσκω, ch. xxi. 15, 17.  
βρώμα, ch. iv. 34.
- S.** βρώσις, ch. iv. 32; vi. 27 (*bis*), 55.
- S.** γεωργός, ch. xv. 1.  
γνωρίζω, ch. xv. 15; xvii. 26 (*bis*).  
δεῖ, ch. iii. 7, 14; iv. 24; ix. 4; x. 16; xii. 34. This word also occurs in ch. iii. 30 and iv. 20; but the evangelist only uses it in ch. iv. 4 and xx. 9. May not both these passages be echoes of the words of Christ?
- J.** δειλιάω, ch. xiv. 27.  
δέρω, ch. xviii. 23.
- S.** δέω, ch. xi. 43.  
διδασκός, ch. vi. 45 (quotation).  
δόλος, ch. i. 47.  
δωρεά, ch. iv. 10.
- S.** δωρεάν, ch. xv. 25.  
εἶδος, ch. v. 37.  
ἐκλέγομαι, ch. vi. 70; xiii. 18; xv. 16 (*bis*), 19.  
ἐκπορεύομαι, ch. v. 29; xv. 26.  
ἐκτείνω, ch. xxi. 18.
- S.** ἐλεύθερος, ch. viii. 33, ascribed to our Lord by the Jews; viii. 36.  
ἐλευθερώω, ch. viii. 32, 36.  
ἐλπίζω, ch. v. 45.  
ἐμπορίον, ch. ii. 16.
- S.** ἐνταφιασμός, ch. xii. 7.  
ἐντέλλομαι, ch. xiv. 31; xv. 14, 17 [viii. 5, by the Jews].  
ἐξάγω, ch. x. 3.
- J.** ἐξυπνίζω, ch. xi. 11.  
ἐπίγειος, ch. iii. 12.

- ἐπιδίδωμαι, ch. xiii. 26; δίδωμα, R.T.
- S.** ἐπουράνιος, ch. iii. 12.  
ἐτοιμάζω, ch. xiv. 2, 3  
S., excepting ἐτοιμος, ch. vii. 6.  
Lu. xxii. 33.
- J.** ζωννύω, ch. xxi. 18 (*bis*).  
ζωοποιέω, ch. v. 21 (*bis*); vi. 63.
- S.** θαρσέω, ch. xvi. 33; occurs six times in the synoptic Gospels, in each instance ascribed to our Lord.
- S.** θερίζω, ch. iv. 36 (*bis*), 37, 38.  
**S.** θερισμός, ch. iv. 35 (*bis*).  
**J.** θήκη, ch. xviii. 11.  
**S.** θλίψις, ch. xvi. 21, 33.  
θρηνέω, ch. xvi. 20.  
θύω, ch. x. 10.  
Ἰσραηλίτης, ch. i. 47.  
καθαίρω, ch. xv. 2.  
καθαρός, ch. xiii. 10 (*bis*), 11; xv. 3.  
καίω, ch. v. 35; xv. 8.  
κακῶς, ch. xviii. 23.  
καῖν, ch. viii. 14; x. 38; xi. 25.
- S.** S., excepting καρπός, ch. iv. 36; xii. 24; xv. 2, 4, 5, 8, 16.  
Lu. i. 42.  
καταβολή, ch. xvii. 24.  
κατακρίνω, ch. viii. 10, 11.  
κατήγορος, ch. viii. 10; R.T. omits.  
**J.** κλέπτω, ch. x. 10.  
**J.** κλῆμα, ch. xv. 2, 4, 5, 6.  
**S.** κόκκος, ch. xii. 24.  
κόπος, ch. iv. 38.  
κρατέω, ch. xx. 23 (*bis*).  
κρίμα, ch. ix. 39.  
λατρεία, ch. xvi. 2.  
λοῦω, ch. xiii. 10.
- S.** λύκος, ch. x. 12 (*bis*).  
λύπη, ch. xvi. 6, 20, 21, 22.  
**S.** λύχνος, ch. v. 35.
- S.** S., excepting μακάριος, ch. xiii. 17; xx. 29.  
Lu. i. 45; xi. 27.  
μηκέτι, ch. v. 14; viii. 11.  
μὴ οὐκ, ch. xviii. 11.  
μικρόν (adv.), ch. xii. 33; xiv. 19; xvi. 16, 17, 18, 19.
- S.** S., excepting μικρός, ch. vii. 33; xii. 35.  
Mk. xv. 40; Lu. xix. 3.  
μισθωτός, ch. x. 12, 13; R.T. omits.  
**S.** μνημονεύω, ch. xv. 20; xvi. 4, 21.  
**J.** μονή, ch. xiv. 2, 23.  
**S.** νέος, ch. xxi. 18.  
νομή, ch. x. 9.  
ξηραίνω, ch. xv. 6.

<b>S.</b>	δηγέω, ch. xvi. 13.	<b>S.</b>	σκορπίζω, ch. x. 12; xvi. 32.
	ὄντως, ch. viii. 36.	<b>S.</b>	σπείρω, ch. iv. 36, 37.
<b>S.</b>	ὀρφανός, ch. xiv. 18.		συκῆς, ch. i. 48, 50.
	ὄφεις, ch. iii. 14.		σωτηρία, ch. iv. 22.
	πατρίς, ch. iv. 44 (?).	<b>S.</b>	τέρας, ch. iv. 48.
	πεινάω, ch. vi. 35.	<b>J.</b>	τετράμηνον, ch. iv. 35.
	περισσός, ch. x. 10.		τίκτω, ch. xvi. 21.
	περιτέμνω, ch. vii. 22.	<b>S.</b>	τιμᾶω, ch. v. 23 (four times);
	περιτομή, ch. vii. 22, 23.		viii. 49; xii. 26.
	ποιμήν, ch. x. 2, 11, 12, 14, 16.		τιμῆ, ch. iv. 44 (?).
	ποιμνῆ, ch. x. 16.	<b>S.</b>	τρίς, ch. xiii. 38.
	πουλαίνω, ch. xxi. 16.	<b>S.</b>	τρώγω, ch. vi. 54, 56, 57, 58;
	πόσις, ch. vi. 55.		xiii. 18.
<b>S., excepting</b>	ποταμός, ch. vii. 38.	<b>S.</b>	ὁμέτερος, ch. vii. 6; viii. 17;
<b>Mk. i. 5.</b>			xv. 20.
<b>J.</b>	πότερον, ch. vii. 17.		ὁπότεριμα, ch. xiii. 15.
	ποτήριον, ch. xviii. 11.		ὁπομνήσκω, ch. xiv. 26.
	προσκύπτω, ch. xi. 9, 10.		ὄσπερ, ch. xiii. 36.
<b>J.</b>	προσκυνητής, ch. iv. 23.	<b>S., excepting</b>	ὕψω, ch. iii. 14; viii. 28; xii.
<b>J.</b>	προσφάγιον, ch. xxi. 5.	<b>Lu. i. 52.</b>	32.
<b>S.</b>	προφασίς, ch. xv. 22.		φεύγω, ch. x. 5, 12, 13; R.T.
<b>J.</b>	πτέρινα, ch. xiii. 18 (quotation).		omits.
	πῦρ, ch. xv. 6.		χείρων, ch. v. 14.
<b>J.</b>	ρέω, ch. vii. 38 (to flow).	<b>J.</b>	χολᾶω, ch. vii. 23.
	σῆτος, ch. xii. 24.		χορτάζω, ch. vi. 26.
<b>S., excepting</b>	σκανδαλίζω, ch. vi. 61; xvi. 1.	<b>S., excepting</b>	ὥσπερ, ch. v. 21, 26.
<b>Matt. iii. 12;</b>		<b>Lu. xviii. 11.</b>	
<b>Luke iii. 17.</b>			

Some grammatical peculiarities must pass under review. The peculiarities of grammatical expression adopted by the Fourth Gospel are not numerous; e.g. he places the article before *οὐρανοῦ* where the other evangelists omit it (except ch. i. 32). He uses the present tense for an apparent future, when that future is represented as being as good as present (ch. xiv. 3); so ch. iv. 21; xvi. 2 (*ἐρχεται ὡρα ὅτε*)—but cf. Matt. xvii. 11—and ch. xii. 26; xiv. 3; xvii. 24, with *θῶν εἰμὶ ἐγώ*, which may mean, “where I shall most surely be,” or, “where I am even now at home” (Winer, *loc. cit.*, p. 332). And, again, where the action seems on the point of realization (ch. x. 32; xiii. 6, 27; xvi. 17; xvii. 11; xxi. 3); but similar usage is found in 1 Cor. xii. 31; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Rom. xv. 25. John’s notion of *ζωή* almost requires the present tense (ch. iii. 36; v. 26).

Notwithstanding the urgency with which Winer maintains the telic force of *ἵνα* throughout the New Testament, in many places where *ἵνα* can and must be limited to a simple apposition, or to what Canon Evans felicitously terms “a contemplated result,” yet Winer enumerates the passages in *John’s* writings where it cannot mean more than what might be expressed by an infinitive clause, as ch. xv. 8; xvii. 3; xv. 13; 1 John iv. 17; 3 John 4 (see also notes on ch. viii. 56). And though Winer with difficulty renounces the telic force of *ἵνα* (1 John iii. 11; ch. vi. 40; xii. 23; xiii. 1; xvi. 2, 32), he says a Greek writer would have perhaps used *ὥστε δοξασθῆναι* instead of *ἵνα δοξασθῇ* (see Winer’s treatment of *ὅπως* in pp. 575, 576). The use of *ἵνα* in this weakened sense shows the sense of a Divine aim pervading all the ordinary nexus of human relations.

Not only John but Paul used certain prepositions (e.g. *ἐν*) in a mode unknown to Greek writers, but adapted to express Christian ideas, which were originally expressed for the apostles in specific force given to Aramaic prepositions. One characteristic feature of the grammatical style of the evangelist is the occurrence of repeated *asyndeta*—the breaking up of sentences which might otherwise be woven into a context by *εἶπε*, or *λέγει αὐτῷ*, or *ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ* (see numerous examples in ch. ii., iii., and iv.). Some of these short sentences, like “Jesus wept” (ch. xi. 35); “Now Barabbas was a robber” (ch. xviii. 40); “And it was night” (ch. xiii. 30); “Now Jesus loved Martha,” etc. (ch. xi. 5);—reveal a suppressed fire which flashed at times through the apparent monotony of the style.

These various peculiarities simply show that the writer's mind was familiarized with the forms of later Greek construction, and open some glimpses into the simplicity and intensity of his nature, his receptivity to a succession of thoughts and facts which one by one left their impression on his mind. They are not of such a character as to separate the writer from his colleagues, or to remove him to another century. They reveal his idiosyncrasies, which have their parallels in Paul and Luke. Some of them are unknown to the classical Greek, while the repetition of the same idea in a positive and negative form, and the play of ideas produced by setting the same term in an ever-ascending and climacteric series of relations, are the demonstrable consequences of a Hebrew training. Thus ch. xvi. 21, the image of the travelling woman, may be compared with Isa. xxi. 3 and Hos. xiii. 13; that of "living water" (ch. iv. 10) with Isa. xli. 18. Ewald justly says, "In respect of the *spirit* which animates it, no language can be more purely Hebraic than that of our author." In respect of mere slavish imitations of Hebrew syntax, or Talmudic form, Renan is right in saying that there is no symptom of either. Luthardt remarks and proves that "there is a Hebrew soul in the Greek language of the evangelist." Keim has eloquently asserted the same idea. The style is no barrier whatever to the theory suggested by the entire external and internal evidence, that the beloved disciple was the author of the Fourth Gospel.

5. The character of the *discourses* contained in the Fourth Gospel. Notwithstanding the abundant proof thus summoned from the Fourth and synoptic Gospels of general identity of the signal portraiture, including that of the Lord himself, and also of special and subtle hints of the moral nature of Jesus, and his mental habitude; and though we have pointed out very numerous touches of positive agreement and sameness of utterance between our two sources, and that in the limited vocabulary placed by John into the lips of the Lord there are not fewer than forty words or terms also attributed by the synoptists to him;—yet the lengthened discourses in ch. iii., v., vi., x., xiii., xiv.—xvi., xvii., do unquestionably introduce the reader of them into a new atmosphere. We do not altogether miss the spirit or even the actuality of parabolic speech, as witness especially ch. x. and xv., yet the contrast is very marked between the parables of the kingdom, in Matt. xiii. and parallels, and the semi-parables and semi-allegorical representations of the closing discourses of the Fourth Gospel. The form of the discourses differs almost as much from the general form of the synoptic discourses as the 'Dialogues' of Plato do from the 'Memorabilia' of Xenophon. That well-known difference of form includes also a profound difference of subject-matter and of definite teaching; yet no one presumes to deny that Xenophon and Plato were alike disciples of Socrates. We need both, and the 'Comedies' of Aristophanes also, to draw our portraiture of the historical Socrates, and to form a sound opinion of the authentic teaching of the great philosopher. The case of Socrates and his followers is an extreme one, because there is hardly anything in common, either as to teaching or framework, in the three representations to which we have referred, whereas in the four Gospels, with their characteristic differences, there are, as we have seen, subtle resemblances of a unique kind, which bridge the chasm between them, and blend the divergences into a wonderful unity. It is so often said that a later disciple placed his own theology and soteriology into the lips of Jesus, and so sought and secured a wide diffusion for his personal opinions, that some investigation of the alleged charge must be here made.

The ingenious and fantastic treatment of the great discourses by Albrecht Thoma, as well as the allegations of Keim, remove any necessity, even the faintest, for travelling on into the second century for the material or spirit of the Christology. According to Thoma, abundant antecedents are found in the synoptic narrative, in the Pauline Epistles (even the universally accredited Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians), and in the speculations of the Alexandrines, the LXX., and the Old Testament, for every shade of doctrine, every form of narrative. The author (whosoever he was) may, therefore, have produced this Gospel, so far as all *necessary* antecedence goes, in the closing decade of the first century. He does but work out in a narrative the material and ideas which were widely circulated, and formed the basis of Christian communities between A.D. 60 and 70. The question then passes from an inquiry into the chronological conditions, into the psychological possibility of our Lord having been the real Author of the ideas about himself which are attributed to him by the Fourth Gospel.

There appears to us scarcely an idea or utterance for which some basis might not be found in the utterances of the synoptists, or in the obvious and intense convictions of the Apostle Paul and those to whom he wrote. The point really raised is—Are these ideas presented to us in their primitive form as they veritably fell from the lips of Jesus? or have they been fashioned by the apostle, who mentally assimilated them, and new-wrought them out of the synoptic narrative and the current theology of the earliest Church? Such questions need not have arisen out of *malice prepense*.<sup>1</sup> There must be, there is, a subtle aroma investing alike both narrative and discourse, which suggests a strongly subjective element in the arrangement of the material, and in the full-orbed splendour with which ideas, which undoubtedly existed when Paul wrote his Epistles, appear to have flashed from the consciousness of Jesus, and to have taken a sharply defined shape in his words. Criticism under the teaching of evolution, or the law of continuity, may be compelled to admit the prevalence of the ideas, but it cannot rest content with the obvious explanation of their origin which the Gospel suggests. Consequently, it is supposed the author, rather than the Christ, originated the form of the great discourses.

The following remarks are offered. (1) A large portion of the synoptic narrative is equally charged with a God-consciousness on the part of Jesus which is absolutely unique. In many cases, as we have seen, the language of the synoptists approaches that of the Johannine Gospel, and his personal assumptions are equally dogmatic and august. (2) The fourth evangelist presupposes and supplements the earlier Gospels, not feeling called upon to review and recite the anthropological and ethical teachings of Galilee, but to dwell on those utterances of the Lord which revealed (theologically) the eternal basis on which the worship of his holy Name was justified. (3) "The synoptists, in the history as in the doctrine of Jesus, present the concrete phenomenon in time; John presents the eternity that has appeared in time. The synoptists do not deny the transcendental, and even allow it to be conjectured that infinite contents dwell in the concrete phenomenon; but they take their point of view on the side of the *phenomenon*. John does not deny, but lays emphatic stress upon, the fact that the 'eternal life' entered historic actuality, and became a phenomenon striking the senses, that 'the Word became flesh;' but he takes his point of view on the side of the infinity which forms the *contents* of the phenomenon" (Luthardt, *lib. cit.*, p. 230). If we can believe that "the Word did become flesh" in Jesus, we cannot feel, or need not feel, that there is any psychological impossibility in the utterance by our Lord of the *ipsissima verba* that John attributed to him. (4) A subjective element cannot be denied, so far as the choice of subject-matter is concerned, and even the order, the symmetry, the dramatic grandeur, and monotony of Divine substratum and ethical appeal; but it appears to us infinitely impossible that the subjectivity went so far as to create the form and substance of the Johannine Gospel.

It is conceivable that the author, in the longer discourses, may have introduced germane thoughts and words which belonged to different occasions—as it is commonly assumed that Matthew and Luke have also done (Matt. x., xiii., xxiii.; Luke xii., xv., xvi.)—and he may, moreover, have selected those more notable and impressive teachings which justified and created in his own mind the sublime theodicy of the prologue; but it is inconceivable that the author of the Gospel invented, rather than recited, marvellous utterances of the Christ, that he appealed to his imagination rather than to his memory for the significant portraiture of him who was pre-eminently "Grace and Truth," "the Truth," "the Life," and "Light of the world."

The Jews were accustomed, far more than we can now readily appreciate, to depend on the memory of the spoken words of their most honoured teachers. For hundreds of years the Mishnah and large portions of the Gemaras and of the Midrash on the sacred books must have been verbally retained in the memory of reverential disciples, and consequently the whole of these discourses would make a comparatively small demand

<sup>1</sup> A defect in Dr. Salmon's most excellent 'Introduction to the New Testament' is that he repeatedly attributes the recent hostility to the Fourth Gospel to an *arrière-pensée* of the following kind: "If it be genuine and historical, then the supernatural order must be admitted, and the Divinity of the Son of God is proved. And, seeing that such conclusions as these can be drawn from its historicity, the Johannine authorship must be traversed at all hazards, and repudiated either by fair or by false means."

on the powers of such a disciple as we imagine St. John to have been. The prolonged discourse on the night of the Passion may easily have been indelibly impressed upon the mind of the more susceptible hearers. The history of the Church as it enacted itself at Jerusalem and elsewhere would perpetually bring to light and tend to emphasize the special instructions given on that memorable night, so eminently adapted to prepare their minds, not only for the great catastrophe, but for such scenes as Pentecost, and for the numerous conflicts which arose as the little band went forth to face the world, and to become rapidly that illustrious society which spread from the upper chamber in Jerusalem to Antioch and Ephesus, to Babylon in the East, and to the metropolis of the world.

If Jesus can be believed to be the "Word made flesh," the Head of a new humanity, the Door opened into heaven, the Giver of eternal life, the Dispenser and Baptizer with the Holy Ghost; if he were one with the Father, and continued after his departure to rule, teach, and save his disciples, and to blend them into a sacred and unique fellowship;—it is not in the least degree abnormal that he should have uttered every one of these august and solemn words.

### IX. THE TEACHING OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Numerous hypotheses touching the occasion of the production of the Gospel vanish if the main thesis which has been sustained throughout the foregoing pages be proved. We are brought back from the agitations of Gnostic heresy to earlier struggles. The speculations are less complicated; the struggle between the Hellenic and Hebraic element in the Church less severe than in the days of Marcion, Justin, and the Clementines. The early influence of the Cerinthian ideas was a source of agitation in the Church. The perfect humanity of the Son of God was doubted on the one side, his enthronement as our "Lord God" spurned on the other. The aged apostle was induced to add to the widely circulated synoptic literature his own richest reminiscences of the teaching of the Master. The fulness of this instruction may be usefully exhibited by reducing it to the following heads or groups of thought.<sup>1</sup>

1. *The teaching of the Gospel, whether on the lips of Jesus or the evangelist himself, touching the Godhead.* We have already shown that there are fundamental distinctions in the style and vocabulary of John and of the Johannine Christ; but it is more than probable that John's own style was framed by the influence which his communion with the Lord had exerted upon him. There can be no doubt that the thoughts of Jesus interpenetrated him. He was saturated with them, and they gave a character to all his own meditations on the outcome and meaning of the Lord's life. The prologue is the generalization of all the teaching of our Lord, and is based line by line, thought by thought, upon the teaching of Jesus and the special activities that he records. The teaching of John may be derived, therefore, from every part of the Johannine writings.

The concrete presentation in the Old Testament of "the One," "the only God," the free creation of all things by the Word or Spirit of his own eternal essence, is the basis of the Johannine teaching. The unlikenable One of Isaiah; God invisible not merely to the eyes of flesh, but even to the faculties of human intellect, which cannot find God by searching; God dwelling (as St. Paul says) in the inaccessible light;—was a fundamental idea with the apostle. "No one hath seen God at any time" (ch. i. 18) is a saying

<sup>1</sup> The literature on this subject is extensive. A few only of the recent writings on the subject may be mentioned. Neander, 'History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church' (Eng. trans., ii. 1–58). Reuss, 'Histoire de la Théologie Chrétienne,' ii. 369–564; also his 'Théologie Johannique.' Schmid and Van Oosterzee have, in their 'Biblical Theologies of the New Testament' (Eng. trans.), separated the theology of Christ as contained in the Gospel from that of John himself in his prologue and Epistles and Apocalypse. Baur, 'Biblische Theologie,' represents the doctrinal system of the Fourth Gospel as the highest form of New Testament teaching, rising above both Judaism and Paulinism, and accentuating the difference between them. Köstlin, 'Der Lehrbegriff des Evangeliums und der Briefe Johannis' (1843) is from the Tübingen standpoint of dogmatic and polemical aim of the writer. B. Weiss, 'Biblical Theology of the New Testament' (Eng. trans.), ii. 311–421; Hilgenfeld, 'Das Evangelium und die Briefe Johannis nach ihrem Lehrbegriff dargestellt'; Thoma, 'Die Genesis des Johannes-Evangeliums ein Beitrag zu seiner Auslegung, Geschichte und Kritik' (1882), pp. 171–302.

avouched or implied in our Lord's words (ch. v. 37). This reduces the theophanies of the Old Testament to something less than they were supposed to establish. They are along the line of Divine manifestations, but he himself was witness of far more than patriarch or prophet ever beheld. The representation, however, is perfectly different from the philosophic conception of "the abyss," or "the absolute," from the dream of the Gnostic or the impassive and impersonal abstraction of the Hindu. The personality and individuality of the very essence of Deity is affirmed by every reference to the activity and characteristics of God.

(1) One of the most fundamental utterances is that "God is [a] Spirit" (ch. iv. 24)—a statement which makes the spiritual nature of man the surest guide to human concepts of his invisible essence. Man's inmost ego, his self-conscious intelligence, the centre of his mental processes, gives the direction to all our approximations to the essence of God. He is the "veritable God" (ch. xvii. 3), answering as no heathen deity has ever done to that august reality. Two other commanding and comprehensive terms lie at the heart of the Johannine conception. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). This is suggestive of the absolute perfection of the Divine Spirit, the illumination which proceeds from him, by which all other things can be perceived, as well as of the unsullied purity of all his character. We learn that God is (not luminous, but) *Light itself*. The Lord addresses him as "righteous" (ch. xvii. 25), justifying all his ways and vindicating all his providence.

The other supreme definition of the essence of the Godhead is "God is love," and "love is of God" (1 John iv. 8). The most fundamental and comprehensive idea of God is that he *loves*, that he lavishes, bestows himself upon the objects which he has made. The God of whom Jesus speaks "loved the world" (ch. iii. 16), and evermore contemplates the world which he has made with supreme satisfaction. He is "in the beginning" (ch. i. 1), and therefore "before all things;" and his "bosom" (ch. i. 18) is spoken of as the dwelling-place of infinite blessedness.

(2) But the most instructive term which is frequently on the lips of the evangelist is "the *Father*." The idea is not an original one fashioned by this writer or set down alone by him, but it is the dominant and all-pervading one. God was described by the prophets as the Father of the theocratic people (Deut. xxxii. 6; Isa. lxiii. 16; lxiv. 8; Jer. xxxi. 9, 20; Hos. xi. 1). Israel is spoken of in some of these passages as his "sons and daughters" (Isa. i. 2, 4; lxiii. 8; Deut. xiv. 1). A spiritual relationship between God and his people, based on fundamental qualities, and connoting far more than the creatorship or the makership of *Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε*. Our Lord is reported by the synoptists to have called God "my Father" (Matt. xi. 27), and in many places to have spoken of "your Father" (Matt. vi. 4, 6, 8, 15; xxiii. 9; Luke vi. 36). The term is expanded in many ways by the addition "in heaven," or "heavenly" (Matt. v. 16, 45; vi. 1, 9, 14, 26, 32; vii. 11). God is not the Father of inanimate or irrational beings, showing that those who can call God their "Father" possess a nature akin to his own. But the Fatherhood of God suggests a special form of moral and spiritual relationship which may have been forfeited, and which by Divine love is re-established.

The Gospel of John represents our Lord as continually speaking of God as "the Father," "my Father," and as "your Father" (ch. xx. 17). He is the "living Father" who has "life in himself" (ch. v. 26), who seeks for spiritual worshippers (ch. iv. 23), who loves the Son (ch. v. 19; x. 17; xvii. 24, 26) with a supreme affection which yet passes over and through the Son to those who have entered into living harmony with himself (ch. xvi. 27; xvii. 26). The connection between God as Father and God as Spirit is strenuously preserved (ch. iv. 22—24), the latter term expounding the method in which the Fatherhood energizes and reveals itself in its fullness of power. The Father is *Almighty*, and this is especially enforced in his power to quicken the dead (ch. v. 21). He is greater than all (ch. x. 29)—greater than the Son (ch. xiv. 28). He is *eternal* (ch. xvii. 5, 24), *holy* (ch. xvii. 11), and *righteous* (ch. xvii. 25).

This writer builds his entire conception on this as its fundamental basis. It differs profoundly from that of the Alexandrine or Oriental metaphysic; and though abundant preparation had been made for it in the Old Testament, and though all its essential features are found in the synoptists, it is the distinguishing element of the teaching of Christ in the Fourth Gospel, and had verily saturated the mind of the author of the



Gospel and Epistles. In a sense, and to a degree never before realized on earth or expressed in literature, do we come face to face with One whose God-consciousness was veritably expressed by the epithet, "the Father," "my Father." Christ is not merely the Expression of the ineffable One, and "the Image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15), but the Son of the Father. The relation of *Logos* to *Theos* is warmed into and expounded by the relation of a *Son* to a *Father*. The idea is not peculiar to John, for St. Paul declared that "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," and that "through Christ we have access to the Father;" and the writer to the Hebrews (i. 2) had laid it down in words suggested by the author of 'Wisdom of Solomon,' that Christ the Son was the Effluence of the Father's glory, the express Image of his substance or essence. That essence was a Father's heart; that effluence was the Son of the Blessed.

(3) *The Father and the Son*. The Fatherhood of God does not exhaust the concept which St. John formed of the Godhead; for within the bosom of the Father, in his essential Divinity, insphered in his eternal glory before the world was, "with him," and yet "One with him," was "the Son." The Fatherhood was essential to God, and therefore the Sonship was before all worlds. The gracious self-communication, the infinite benevolence of God, appertains to his eternal essence. From before all time, and independently of time and place and earthly service, the evangelist saw love in infinite activity, streaming forth in boundless, inexhaustible fulness, and adequately responded to. This conception of God goes down to the depths of thought, and forms the basis of all the moral perfections of Deity, and discriminates it from the impersonal abstractions and characterless quiescence and inaccessibility of the Supreme Monad of the Platonic schools.

The Johannine conception starts with the use of certain expressions which had arisen in the schools of Jewish thought, and confers upon them a meaning and application from which those schools would have shrunk. The *Θεός*, whose most fundamental Name and whose essential Being is set forth as "the Father," is first of all described as before the creation of the world, or of every thing and force which has come into being, standing in intimate immanent relations with the *Λόγος* (the expression of his own thought and will), who is, while "with God," also God himself. Distinction from God is twice over covered by the explicit assertion, "the Word was God," and the same idea is subsequently expressed in the prologue (ch. i. 18) by the terms of "Father" and "only begotten Son." The *μονογενής* is in the bosom of the Father, and therefore alone competent to reveal him. Equality of essence is predicated alike of Father and Son, of *Theos* and *Logos*, and yet distinction of hypostasis is also asserted. The Godhead, therefore, involves an internal and reciprocally immanent relation. Reuss strongly maintains that the evangelist simply leads us back to the beginning of time, and says nothing of an eternal relation. Any such assertion is, according to criticism, an inference from the text, and not contained in it. We may concede that the earliest Creeds, culminating in those of Nicæa, Chalcedon, and the so-called Athanasian, do draw this inference; but it is one which logically and immediately flows out of the text. The converse of the inference, or the Arian assertion, "that there was (time or period) when he was not," and "before he was begotten," does immediately predicate an infinite difference between the Father and Son—a statement entirely incompatible with the equality of nature and essence and with the true monotheism of the entire biblical revelation. But so far as the self-consciousness of this Son is represented in the consciousness of Jesus, we frankly concede that there is in the Divine order a superiority, primacy, solity, ascribed to the Father: he who has independently life in himself gave the like self-dependence to the Son (ch. v. 27). The Father sent the Son. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do" (ch. v. 19). The Father and Son are one, but the Father sanctified and sent the Son into the world (ch. x. 31–37). The Father created all things "through (*διὰ*) the *Logos*." "The Father is greater than I," said Christ (ch. xiv. 28). "I live," said he (*διὰ τὸν Πατέρα*, ch. vi. 57), "on account of the Father." The Father gave the Spirit to the Son (ch. iii. 34). This headship of the Father does not contradict the eternal filiation, but both ideas are necessary to interpret the fulness of meaning which St. John gives to the concept of the "only veritable God."

(4) *God and the Logos*. The characteristics of the *Λόγος* before his manifestation in the humanity of Christ are that he is the Divine Agent in the creation, the Source of

life and the light of the world, because both the Life and Light of God. He was evermore coming like light into the darkness of humanity, like life into the soul of man. He came in many ways to his own. He gave power (*ἐξουσία*) to those who believed on his Name "to become sons of God." Although the Father sent him, commissioned the Son for these lofty purposes, yet it was as "beam" proceeds from "light," as "Word" follows "Spirit." He dwells, like Wisdom, in the midst of the throne, and in the bosom of the Almighty. He is one with the Father in being, essence, and will. This blending and unity of the Father and Son, of Theos and Logos, was the metaphysical basis of the entire Johannine superstructure. We see that it is not peculiar to John. The Old Testament was built on the same synthetic representation. Jehovah, and the Angel of Jehovah, the unapproachable self-existent, eternal One, yet came into personal and anthropomorphic, visible and audible, relations with men. The true Wisdom in the heart of man, found and cherished by those who love her, is the eternal effulgence of God's glory and co-possessor of his throne (see p. li.).

The conception interprets the phenomena of both providence and prophecy, of conscience and theophany. The Lord is always coming to his own, and even giving them power to receive him, and authority to become sons of the ever-blessed and Almighty Father. Before he came in the flesh, human nature was fashioned in his image and likeness, and his most appropriate manifestation assumed freely the appearance of an august and Divine humanity. The Word or Angel of the Lord was concerned with the fortunes and perils of individuals whose career would affect the whole subsequent history of the people of the covenant. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hagar, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, received these open visions until the rise of the prophetic order, whose function was "to bear witness to the true Light which lighteth every man." The Christ of the Fourth Gospel recognizes those who are "of the truth," and come to the Light of the world, and who hear his voice. This "Light" and this "voice" must have been available apart from the special revelation and effulgence of his glory in the Son of man. One peculiarity of the Johannine conception was that in the Word there was *life*, and instead of making this life the consequence of the light, the process is reversed—the life was the light. "Life" is more than *being*, and in its fulness of manifestation could appertain on earth to man only. The reason or the motive of the manifestation of life was communication of blessedness and kinship to the Source of all blessedness to the human race. From the Divine *life* produced in man, from the new creation wrought in human nature, *light* has been evermore gleaming. In proportion to the reality and extent of the life is the brilliancy of the light. But while he came to his own, even to those best prepared to receive him, they "received him not." The darkness of humanity did not apprehend the light of Deity, so that a method of approach for the life and the light, more explicit and efficacious than any which had preceded, became necessary to satisfy the irrepressible and unutterable love of God.

(5) *The Word made flesh.* The great proof-text, the motto of the Johannine Gospel, is that "the Word became flesh" (ch. i. 14), *i.e.* became man in his weakness and dependence, and in his composite and mysterious nature. "Flesh" (*σάρξ*) does not mean the bare physical nature, nor the physical and psychical natures combined. "Flesh" in numerous passages connotes the whole of human nature without grace, and therefore the *πνεῦμα* as well. Abundant evidence is forthcoming to show that Jesus possessed both soul and spirit (ch. xi. 33; xii. 27; xiii. 21; xix. 30), and therefore the Fourth Gospel must be supposed to include under the *σάρξ* which the *Λόγος* became, the whole interior manhood, inclusive of "will," "spirit," "soul;" but the term is used in preference to *ἄνθρωπος*, in order to mark especially the visibility, the corporeity, the sensuous and phenomenal aspect of this his last and greatest self-communication to man. Great conflict has prevailed in later years over the nature of the "becoming" which St. John here attributes to the Logos. The kenotic speculations of Thomasius, Gess, Godet, and others press the force of St. Paul's statement that he who was in the form (*μορφή*) of God emptied (*ἐκένωσεν αὐτόν*) himself, forewent his glory; and that therefore the expression before us must imply such a depotentiation of the Logos that he was no longer Logos, but that temporarily he was *σάρξ*, and *σάρξ* only, without any of the consciousness of his own Divine perfections, not even of Divine love and righteousness. This theory has insuperable difficulties of its own. The consciousness by Christ of his own pre-existence lifts him above mere

*σάρξ*, or any psilanthropical interpretation. The simple fact that he was conscious of "a glory with the Father before the world was," and that he was about to return to it (ch. xvii. 5, 24) and reveal it to his disciples; that he was conscious while on earth of being "in heaven," having come down thence (ch. iii. 13); that his earthly life was a "coming down from heaven" as heavenly manna; that he was about to ascend to where he was before (ch. vi. 33, 51, 62); that before Abraham came into being he could say, "I AM"—furnish abundant proof of his self-conscious pre-existence, and show that the Ego in and of which he spake was more than the *σάρξ*—was nothing short of the *Λόγος*. Reuss is very urgent in calling attention to the fact that the human life of the Logos was not (according to the Fourth Gospel) any humiliation, or exinanition; that even death itself was his *δόξα* and his *ὑπούσθαι* (ch. iii. 14; viii. 28; xii. 23, 32; xiii. 31).

Yet it must be admitted that the author of the Fourth Gospel calls more express attention to the humanity, and to the dogma of Christ having come "in the flesh," than any other writer of the New Testament. He was Son of a human mother, was interested in the domestic affairs of his neighbourhood (ch. ii. 1—12), had brothers who were unable frankly to admit his claims to Messiahship (ch. vii. 3—6), was influenced by the movements of different tendencies at work in Judæa and Galilee, was "weary and thirsty" with his wayfaring in the heat of the day (ch. iv. 1—3, 6, 7), "wept" at the grave of a friend (ch. xi. 35), was pierced by the treachery and unsusceptibility of his disciples (ch. vi. 66, 67, 70) as well as by the Roman soldier's spear (ch. xix. 34—37), was concerned about his mother even when hanging on the cross (ch. xix. 25—27), and about the physical need of his disciples after he had risen from the dead (ch. xxi. 9). We can accept the position that his essential Person was never obliterated, but we consider that the Fourth Gospel represents the very union of this humanity with the Divine nature to be a humbling of himself to human conditions that is altogether unspeakable. The limitation of human knowledge, the consciousness of physical need, the pain and suffering, temptation and resistance, experienced throughout his career, were the expression of an infinite love and condescension. The closeness of the union, the perfect blending into one Person of the purely human with the Logos who was with God (or with the Only Begotten of the Father), involved two things: (a) the humiliation of the Logos, and (b) the glory of the Only Begotten, full of grace and truth. The eyes of the apostles saw and received this fulness, perceived the continuous glorification of the humanity by which they were being drawn, mastered, overwhelmed; but it is perfectly compatible with this conception that the Lord by his Divine nature was actually made participant in the humiliation and weakness of the flesh and the bitter hostility and prejudice of the world. It is abundantly evident that only a few men rose to the full apprehension of his glory. Consequently, he must have had the perpetual consciousness of indescribable loneliness and sorrow. The almost feminine inquiry, "Do ye now believe?" (ch. xvi. 31, 32), enforces the opposite of the contention of Reuss.

It is often said that *prayer* on the part of Christ is in itself an unmistakable indication of the depotentiation of the Logos, or else it was a meaningless display of what was in no sense genuine prayer. We do not regard it as either one or the other. John's Gospel especially reveals the necessity on the part of our Lord's humanity for the exercise of prayer, and so far indicates the humiliation of the Son of God in the mediatorial work he had undertaken (ch. vi. 15; xi. 41; xii. 27; xvii.). But why should the Logos be supposed, in these prayers, to have retired into inaccessible depths of Deity? It is the Logos now made flesh of whom the apostle is speaking, and therefore experiencing in his mediatorial work the need of prayer, and giving, moreover, the true conception, and embodying the fundamental ideal of prayer, viz. of the human in perfect harmony with the Divine, knowing that God hears him always, anticipating the conscious acts of God. Prayer, like death, is a Divine act of the Son of God, only capable of being enacted through the humanity that he assumed.

The "Logos made flesh" corresponds with "water which became [was made] wine" in this—that, as water was not transubstantiated into something essentially different from itself, but rather took up into itself elements not previously in the water, so the Logos took human nature up into itself, and the Ego of the Incarnate Word could henceforth feel and declare that, though the Father was "greater than he," the Father

and he were essentially one (ch. xiv. 28). The Father and the Son were one in so deep a sense (ch. x. 30) that all men were to honour the Son even as they honour the Father (ch. v. 23, 24). In the question, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" (ch. xiv. 9), Jesus felt that he had not been recognized by his disciples if they had not perceived the Father in him. They must have formed an entirely inadequate notion of himself if they had found nothing more than his human perfections. Even the outline of the Man must have been blurred, and the impression of the humanity imperfect. Notably so; the very tone of his prayers, the quality of his assumptions, the greatness of his human claims, the declaration that he would quicken the dead and judge the world, would be sure to have led those who heard these words into wrong notions of his humanity, unless they could have also penetrated to the amazing truth that he was in the Father, and the Father in him.

(6) *The Son of God, the Christ, the Son of man.* These relations between the God-Man and the Father justify the two great names by which the Lord designated himself. He calls himself "Son of God." He did not reprove Nathanael (ch. i. 50, 51) when he attributed this title to him in a theocratic sense, but he took much higher ground when he spoke of himself as "the Son of God," or "the Son," sent by the Father to save the world (ch. iii. 16, 17), to give eternal life (ch. xvii. 2), to judge (ch. v. 27) and exercise authority over all flesh (ch. xvii. 2), as the Agent of the Father, the Messenger of the Father, and as "sent into the world" to "do the Father's will" and "to finish his work." The "Son of God" is the eternal Companion and Co-operator with the Father; he knows the Father, and is the Object of the Father's love. The Father is the Potency, the Son is the Reality of all creative and redemptive operations; the Father is the eternal Ground, the Son is the Means and Organ and Executor of all the Divine activity in nature and grace. In all these respects the Divine aspect of his Personality comes into view, almost separated from the humanity, or overshadowing it with glory. The Word made flesh tabernacled among us, took up his habitation among us as in the temple of his body, and the glory which flashed from the *adytum* of this temple was the grace and truth of the Only Begotten of the Father (ch. i. 14).

The identity of the "Logos made flesh" with "the Christ" receives the greatest prominence in the Gospel (ch. i. 17). Grace and truth (which are said in ver. 14. to have streamed forth from the Logos made flesh) came by *Jesus Christ* (cf. 1 John v. 20, "We are in the true, [even] in his Son Jesus Christ"). In the intercessory prayer (ch. xvii. 3), "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only veritable God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." While the Baptist repudiates the assumption of being the Christ (ch. i. 20), it is clear that some of the mighty things done by him whom as yet they knew not were associated with the Christ of whom Moses and the prophets had spoken (ch. i. 41, 45). The "King of Israel" is but another name to express Nathanael's conviction. The following chapters reveal the purifying process passing over the conception (ch. iii. 28, 29). The Samaritans hail him as the Christ (ch. iv. 25, 26, 29). The effect produced by his great sign (ch. vi. 14) involves the confession, "This is the Prophet coming into the world." He refuses the temporal kingship, but he raises their conception to the transcendent gift of his Divine Person. The text of many manuscripts makes the confession of Peter (ch. vi. 68) an acknowledgment of Messiahship (see notes). The whole argument of ch. vii. 25—43 shows that Jesus is accepting, and that the author is assigning, the idea of the Christ to the Lord (cf. ch. ix. 22, 35). Martha, without rebuke, ascribes the same function to him (ch. xi. 27), and all that follows refines, matures, illumines, the mighty Name. The public assumption of Messianic glory (ch. xii. 12—19) suffers further exposition (ch. xii. 34—36). All the revelations of ch. xiii.—xvii. proceed on the assumption. The conversation with Pilate, the title of the cross, but above all the declaration of the evangelist (ch. xx. 31), show the full identification of the Christ, the Logos made flesh, and the Son of God.

It is equally remarkable that our Lord, in the Fourth Gospel, quite as frequently designated himself as "*Son of man*"—a term probably derived from the Old Testament usage, which, though occasionally denoting the bare idea of "man" (in Ezekiel), in Daniel is associated with the highest manifestation of God (Dan. vii.). The phrase there seems to mean the ideal of man, the perfect Image of God, the heavenly Man, realizing the conception of what St. Paul calls the Second Adam. Christ, in the synoptists, adopts the name, though his disciples never attribute it to him (except in

the two exceptional cases of the dying Stephen, who beheld him in his glory, and of St. John in the Apocalypse). The occasions on which our Lord thus names himself by no means lay special emphasis thereby on the humiliation of the Christ. Thus it is as "Son of man" that he "forgives sin"—a function which none can discharge but God only (Matt. ix. 6 and parallel passages). The Son of man is "Lord of the sabbath" (Matt. xii. 8 and parallel passages), is "the Sower" of the seed of the kingdom (Matt. xiii. 37); he seeks and saves the lost (Luke ix. 10); comes not to be served, but to serve (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45). The Son of man will rise from the dead and judge the world (Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26; xii. 8, etc.; Matt. xix. 28). The Fourth Gospel corresponds with the synoptists in the same usage, and ch. i. 51 and iii. 13 show that the Lord spoke of himself as "Son of man" when implying that, behind the attributes of his humanity, and conferring upon that humanity its archetypal character, was his Divine nature. He was "Son of man" because he was "Son of God." The heavens are opened round about him: though on earth, he is in heaven. He is lifted up in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he may heal the deadly poison of that flesh (ch. iii. 14): He will judge all men because he is the "Son of man" (ch. v. 27); not a *tertium quid*, neither God nor man; but God in the plenitude of his power, man in the sufficiency of his knowledge and sympathy. The consciousness of his pre-existence with God must have intensified the sense of contrast between "the form of God" and "the form of a servant," between the eternal "Effulgence of the Father's glory" and "the fashion of man," through which for certain ends the glory was veiled for all, and but dimly and slowly perceived by any.

There can be no doubt that the evangelist's conception of the Godhead was not complete by the bare ascription of the name of Father to the Deity. Having learned in the school of Christ, he considered and taught that, in order to appreciate the Father, we must recognize and realize the existence of his only begotten Son. He held that the fulness of God is not an impersonal unity, but an eternal relationship; that the relation between "God" and "the Word," between "the Father" and "the Son," is necessary to any adequate conception of the Fatherhood of God. Jesus was therefore a revelation of both the Father and the Son.

(7) *The Spirit and the Trinity.* But the Johannine conception of the Godhead was not consummated in this duality. A mysterious method of speech pervades the Scripture, by which the self-consciousness of both Father and Son is reduced to a personal unity. The Old Testament as well as the New is charged with this aid to our imagination and this solace to our faith. There is no place here for a review of the doctrine or idea of the Holy Spirit as set forth either in the earlier Scriptures or in the Pauline Epistles beyond this—that the Spirit of God is there described as the Source and Agent of Divine activity in the old creation; as effecting and preserving the immanence of God in nature; as itself the Source of human *ego*; as the element of order and beauty in heaven and earth; as the silent but mighty energy which lifts and develops the intellect of man to its highest flights, and encourages the heart and stimulates the conscience to their noblest exercise. The prophets and psalmists confess the power of the Spirit of God, and anticipate that the highest functions of Messiah will be conferred upon him by the Holy Spirit. Certainly this appellation is sometimes used as though the term meant nothing more than a Hebrew parallelism for *God himself*, but yet in other places it expressly defines the Spirit as the mighty Agency, by which God himself works in the nature of man. The synoptists preserve this same phraseology and attitude to the Holy Spirit, the formation of the humanity of Jesus (Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35), the direction of his purposes (Mark i. 12), the consecration of that humanity to the Messianic office (Mark i. 10, 11 and parallel passages), the order and power by which Jesus met and foiled the tempter. The Spirit of God is the power by or in which Jesus commences his ministry (Luke iv. 1) and performs his miracles on those possessed by the devil (Matt. xii. 28). In the synoptists the Lord contrasts the dispensation of the Son of man with that which is inaugurated by the Holy Spirit (Matt. xii. 29—32 and parallel passages). Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. iii. 11), and promises the Spirit as the greatest and best gift of the Father's love (Luke xi. 13). This is the "promise of the Father" for which the early Church waited (Luke xxiv. 49), and which came upon the disciples with strange potency on Pentecost (Acts i. ii.). This Spirit, which bound discordant elements into a unity, into a body, and produced in individuals and in the community the most

radical changes and conferred the most amazing powers, is reckoned by St. Paul to be the Spirit of Christ, *and* the Spirit of him that raised Christ from the dead (Rom. viii. 9—11). Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot, and he was declared to be Son of God by the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. i. 4). This Spirit can be resisted, blasphemed, quenched, obeyed, loved, and adored; and, while unquestionably Divine, is nevertheless distinct from the Father and the Son. What new teaching does the Fourth Gospel introduce on this subject? We learn that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit (ch. i. 33), and that the Holy Spirit rested on Christ (ch. i. 32), and was given to him in unmeasurable abundance (ch. iii. 34).

When God was said to be Spirit (ch. iv. 24), it would seem that the whole Godhead (whether Father, Son, Logos, or Spirit) was Spirit, and nothing can be gathered hence of any *hypostasis* or *ousia*, but rather a hint is given of the supreme character of the very essence of Deity, as antithetic to theories of his impersonality, of his corporeal limitation, of ritual observance, or of idolatrous localization of his energies. Christ had often spoken of the "living water" which he could and would give to quench all human thirst. He promises the great abundance of this gift, and describes it as a kind of blessedness which would make each recipient a perennial supply of it for others (ch. iv. 14). St. John says this was Christ's description of the Holy Spirit, which those who should believe on himself would receive, for the "Holy Spirit was not yet [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified" (ch. vii. 37—39). In other words, when Christ should, as the Victor over death, have taken his place on the throne of God, then the whole material wherewith the Spirit would deal with men would so immeasurably transcend all that had ever been previously vouchsafed, that in comparison with what had gone before the Holy Spirit had not yet been (given) at all. The entire "ministration of death [and of the letter, and of the body] had no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth." When the hour at length drew near that the brief manifestation in the flesh was to be removed from human eyes, our Lord declared more fully the substitute for his own constant care which he was about to send to them, One who should "abide with them for ever," "whom the world would not see, or receive, or take away from them" (ch. xiv. 17). This "*other* Paraclete" is described as the "Holy Spirit," whom the Father would send in his Name, whom he too would send from the Father (ch. xiv. 25, 26), whose coming to them for all gracious purposes was identical with the coming of Christ himself. Nay, more, his advent would prove a coming to them of both the *Father* and the *Son*. As he had glorified the Father, the Holy Spirit would glorify him; for he would take of the things of Christ, and show these to the disciples (ch. xvi. 13—15). He, like the Son himself, would not speak from himself. He would declare that which he knew of the Father. He would so quicken the understanding of the disciples as to bring all things to their remembrance, and thus perpetuate the primary instruction they had received, but the power of which they might lose sight of. The glorious gift of the Spirit is said to be in answer to his own prayer as the exalted and glorified Christ, and as co-operating with them, not only for their own solace and refreshment, but also as a testimony to himself, and (ch. xv. 26, 27) a convicting and convincing power on the outside world (ch. xvi. 7—11). The exaltation, the departure of Christ, the cessation of the manifestation in the likeness of the flesh, was indispensable to the full bestowment of the spiritual gift. Then the world should be convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment (ch. xvi. 7—11). In anticipation of this new dispensation, he symbolically breathed on his disciples, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (ch. xx. 22), thus preparing the way for the great manifestation of the Day of Pentecost.

The teaching of the Fourth Gospel was in harmony with the biblical idea throughout, and it explains the intensity with which Paul had already dwelt on this sublime theme, and the detail into which he had expanded the fundamental idea. John had not borrowed from Paul, nor from Alexandria, nor from Gnostic notions of æonic development, but set forth those positions out of which both revelation and superstition and the speculative tendencies of the age have severally developed so much.

To suppose these Johannine doctrines to have been the crystallization of Pauline, or Gnostic, or Montanistic thought is contrary to all probability. If Christ himself had given forth (as John says he did) this idea of the relation of the Holy Spirit to his own Person and to his prospective work, and if many hints of this specific teaching were circulating in the Church, the entire Pauline representation and that of the Acts

becomes thinkable. As a condensation of St. Paul or a corrective of second-century ideas, it is incredible and confused.

The Fourth Gospel thus does much to prepare the Christian Church for the full doctrine of the Godhead. The consciousness of Jesus was so set forth therein as to induce all Christians to believe in God, not in the form of a solitary Monad, but as One who from eternity contained in his own Being the relations of Father and Son, and whose unity of essence is itself as personal as is the Father or the Son.

To bring together the whole teaching that emerges from the "Word made flesh," from the God-Man as the centre of the life of a renewed humanity, we are led to positive distinctions in that Deity which stood in such close relations with human nature. "The Spirit" is none other than the Spirit of the Christ energizing in the hearts of believers. The Spirit of the Christ which unites the Logos and the flesh is none other than the Spirit of the Logos, the Spirit of God's Son; and the Spirit of the Son is the Spirit of the Father, for the Father and the Son are *one*. The doctrine of the immanent Trinity seems an inevitable consequence of any admission that the Fourth Gospel sets forth historically the veritable consciousness of the Lord Christ. The argument moves on from incident to incident, from word to word, from synonym to synonym, of the all-blessed One; until he who is hailed as Messiah and sacrificial Lamb and theocratic King appears, to be the Opener of heaven, endowed with creative power, the Lord of the temple, the Reader of human hearts, the Source of life and healing, the Bridegroom of the true theocracy, greater than he who was the greatest of the sons of men. We follow on in the narrative, to find that, though the flesh of the Christ provokes endless antagonism, and so moves the "darkness" that it becomes a fearful and felt oppression, yet the idea of the Divine humanity becomes more and more intense in each department of this mighty synthesis.

The humanity admits the need of water from Jacob's well, but flashes forth, while so doing, such spiritual truth that he is hailed as the Messiah-Prophet and Saviour of the world. The bestowment on the impotent man of life leads Jesus to declare the power that he wields to confer life on dead souls and bodies, and the authority he has received to judge the quick and dead (ch. v.); he assumes to be the Life of the world by two great signs on land and sea (ch. vi.), and by conferring upon mankind himself as the veritable "Bread of God which had come down from heaven." In great variety of form he claims to be not only life, but light. He calls himself the Shepherd of souls (ch. x.), able to give to those who submit to him eternal life, because he and the Father are one. He wrestles with death, and snatches one whom he specially loves from the grave (ch. xi.). At that grave his mysterious Personality is displayed as intensely human and unmistakably Divine. Throughout the closing scenes he becomes more and more consciously Divine, as his heart breaks with human tenderness. He loves to the uttermost when he is most of all alive to the fact that all things are entrusted to him (ch. xiii. 1—5). So complete is his revelation of the Divine love that he dares to say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (ch. xiv. 9). He promises to bestow the Divine gift of "the Spirit," and with the Father to come and dwell in human hearts. He takes the whole future into his glance, and offers prayer for those who shall believe on him to the end of time (ch. xvii. 20). He goes forth to meet his doom, to drink the cup of trembling and humiliation to the dregs. He is condemned and submits. He triumphs over death, and receives the unrebuked exclamation, "My Lord and my God!" If this be an historical setting forth of one indubitable series of his highest revelations, then we recognize the consciousness of Jesus as having cast a gleam of surpassing light into the "thick darkness" and profoundest mysteries of the Divine Being. The record of his words and life, as set forth by his most loving friend, furnishes the largest proportion of those facts which the Christian consciousness has endeavoured to bring together in what is called the doctrine of the Trinity.

2. *The Johannine teaching concerning the world.* This divides itself into a trilogy, even as the doctrine of the Godhead does. (1) The world as the creature of God; (2) the world of men; (3) the world's prince.

(1) All things (*πάντα*) came into existence through the agency of the Logos. Not one (thing) entity, atom, force, can be excepted. The entire region of Divine operation is itself the creation of God by the Logos, corresponding to the teaching of the writer to the Hebrews, that by the agency of the Son (equivalent to Logos) God made the *κόσμος*,

the very conditions of time and place. In antithesis to this last conception an organized opposition appears to the Creator-Logos. Darkness, which is not merely negative of light, but an antagonism to it, must, so far as it is a designation of moral agencies, be the creation of the Logos, not as darkness, but as free to act in opposition to God, and thus to take on itself the aspect and characteristics of darkness. In the "all things," not, however, called *κόσμος*, there is both an "above" and a "beneath;" the heaven from which the Son of man has come, and to which he will return, and to which "he lifts his eyes" in prayer, and where are his "Father's house" and "many mansions." He who is "from above is above all." The process that passes over men in their becoming sons of God is a birth "from above," or "from the beginning," or "from the Spirit." This heaven opens over and behind the Son of man (ch. i. 51), and he is consciously in "heaven," and may be seen by regenerated eyes to be one who can and does pass from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth (ch. iii. 13). The *κόσμος* is often used to denote the whole of this visible, tangible, terrestrial dwelling-place. Into it the Son of man comes when the Logos is made flesh (ch. i. 13, 14). From it at last he *ascends* (ch. vi. 62), when he has conquered death and put on the vesture of an immortal humanity (ch. xx. 17). Christ speaks of the "light of *this world*," meaning that which proceeds from the sun (ch. xi. 9). The Johannine Christ notices the most striking features of the earth in which we live—the wind that careers over its surface; the local dwelling-places of men; the food that human bodies need, even his own; the washing of feet from its defilement; the soil in which the corn of wheat takes root; the vineyard and the sheepfold; the burning of the pruned and fruitless branches; the contests among its children for sovereignty over it. All things are put under him, and all the powers of the world are at his disposal. He can accelerate processes of nature and meet great forces of the *κόσμος* with his will. He can face all the powers of nature and all their protest against man with the simple fiat of his will; saving men from starvation and from shipwreck by his word. He told the Jews that they were "of this world," but that he was "not of this world." There is no indication that the (*ἐλθὼν*) stuff or matter of which the world was made was evil, or that the forces of nature were *per se* opposed to their Maker or to the interests of man. He utilizes them, he makes them the instruments of his most beneficent deeds (ch. ii., vi., ix., xiii.). Nor is the *ἔλη* eternal; for it had its beginning, and again the world and the fashion of it will pass away (1 John ii. 17). It is the scene of Divine manifestation. The very flesh which he had himself assumed was "of this world," though *he*, the Ego dwelling in it, was "not of this world." He loved his own to the uttermost while they were "in the world" (ch. xiii. 1). He did not pray that they should be "taken out of the world," but kept from the evil (ch. xvii. 14—16).

(2) *The world of men.* The sense of the word thus considered is not the whole connotation of the word. It is used more frequently (*κόσμος*, not *αἶων*, or *ὁ πᾶν αἶων*), for the whole of humanity considered independently of God. The *κόσμος*, which was made by the *Λόγος* (ch. i. 10), recognized him not, even when he was in the world, whether immanently or by incarnation. This power of cognition, which was not exercised, indicates moral freedom and intellectual power, and therefore refers to *men*, not things. In the great prayer the Lord said (ch. xvii. 25), "O righteous Father, the world [humanity as a whole] hath not recognized thee." The world of men was, in its ignorance and estrangement, in great danger of destruction (ch. iii. 16), and was exposed to judgment (*κρίσις*). The world hates the Christ for the light that he throws on its own evil, and will hate the disciple as it does hate the Master (ch. xv. 16—19). But the world of *men*, notwithstanding its antagonism to and separation from God, is an object of Divine love (ch. iii. 16). This love is the condition and occasion of the mission of the only begotten Son. Jesus has come to save the world; he took upon himself the sin of the world (ch. i. 29); he is the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John ii. 2); he came down from heaven to give life to the world (ch. vi. 33, 51). So that it was not an inert mass of incurable corruption. Those who are "saved," who receive "life," who are chosen out of the world and called to holy service, reveal the great contrast between themselves and those who "will not come to him that they may have life" (ch. v. 40), and a more restricted use of the word *κόσμος*, is confined to those who from that standpoint resist, hate, persecute, all who approach and find him. So that "world" is often the antithesis of the children of God (ch. xiv. 19, 22). Yet



even the "world," in this darkest, deadliest, hatefullest form, is not irretrievably doomed. Jesus sends his disciples into this very world to teach it, and promises the gift and aid of the Comforter to convict it of sin, righteousness, and judgment (ch. xvi. 8—11). The world may give the disciples much "tribulation;" but (said Christ) "be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (ch. xvi. 33). The fellowship and love of the disciples for each other is to convince the world. The purport and end of the conviction is that the world may believe (ch. xvii. 23—26).

The effort that the school of Hilgenfeld and others made to find a Gnostic dualism, an unremediable darkness set over against an eternal light, has failed in dealing with these definitions of "the world." The caustic and terrible words of the eighth chapter should be judged by the dramatic controversy in which they occur. The deadly hatred of the Jews to Christ was at its climax intensified by the very suppression and failure of its attempts, and Christ pressed home the alliance between them and the author of all murder and falsehood; and declared that they would "die in their sins" because they did not believe that he was essentially that which he had evermore said to them (ch. viii. 24—26). But a very forced conclusion is drawn from the words when this teaching is identified with dualism. The condition of deliverance is conspicuous throughout. A recognition of the scene as historic certainty at once shatters the speculation that has been founded upon it.

Doubtless throughout the Gospel, as throughout the New Testament and the Old Testament, the selective and redemptive activity of God's grace is referred to. There are those who are not drawn to the Son by all his tenderness, and are not given to the Son, that, having reached him, they may find access by him to the Father (see notes ch. vi. 44; xiv. 6). There are who practise evil (*πρὸς πορνείας τὰ φαῦλα*), and who will not come to the light (ch. iii. 20, 21), upon whom the wrath of God abides (ch. iii. 36), who will eventually come forth to the resurrection of judgment (ch. v. 29), whom the Moses in whom they trust charges with sin (ch. v. 45). One human being is spoken of as *ὁ δὲ βέλους* (ch. vi. 70). Christ's unbelieving hearers are contrasted with himself as being *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου* (ch. viii. 23). They are "the servants of sin" (ch. viii. 34). They are children of the manslayer, of the liar, of the devil (ch. viii. 43, 44). They fancy that they see, but are blind, and their sin remaineth (ch. ix. 41). The final summary of the teaching quotes Isa. vi., "He hath blinded their eyes," etc. (a passage quoted by all the synoptists and St. Paul). In every one of these passages of St. John there is no other dualistic teaching than that which pervades the New Testament. The redemptive work itself is arrested and limited by responsible disobedience and unbelief of men. The entire position of the Johannine theology recognizes the human will as the agency which is to appropriate or reject the full benediction. The exclusion from privilege is hypothetical, not predestinated. The mission and message of the Son of God is not *primarily* one of judgment, but one of mercy and of deliverance. "The world," which is the synonym and comprehensive term for "humanity apart from grace," is *loved* by God. The Son of God came to save it; the Comforter to convict it of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and the answer to the great intercessory prayer will be that the *κόσμος*, till then estranged, hateful, unsusceptible, will believe that the Father has sent him.

(3) *The prince of this world.* The Johannine teaching recognizes a centre to the evil that is in the world, a personal antagonist to God and goodness; but in this it is not so explicit as the synoptic or the Pauline teaching. It is to the synoptists we must turn to see the distinct work of this hostile spirit. The peculiarity of John's report is that some of the Jews are addressed as the children of the devil, doing their father's work, imitating the source of falsehood and the first murderer of human life in the evil passions and purposes they were at that moment cherishing. I have discussed (sect. VIII. C. 3) the supposition that John puts into the lips of Jesus a reference to the father of the devil. The language cannot bear this interpretation. We have simply the strong metaphor which treats the resemblance of nature as equivalent to filiation. The evil desires and plans of the would-be murderers of Jesus are referred to the suggestion of the father of lies. They are in the strong language of the synoptic Baptist and Christ, the "offspring of vipers," the seed of the serpent.

John's Gospel does, however, bestow a title on the great evil spirit which is in perfect harmony with the claim made by the devil in the synoptic account of the tempta-

tion (Luke iv. 6). Christ speaks of him as "the prince (*ἀρχὸν*) of this world"—a term which is made even more explicit in the Epistles of Paul, where he is "ruler of the darkness of the world" (Eph. vi. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. ii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 20); he is prince of death (Heb. ii. 14—16) and roaring lion (1 Pet. v. 8). Thoma (*loc. cit.*, pp. 202—205) endeavours to make out a fundamental difference between the Johannine teaching and the rest of the New Testament in this—that the only region of operation assigned to "the prince of this world" is the *human* spirit (even the human spirit of Jesus himself), not the *bodies* of men, or the world as such, or the heavens or the abode of spirits; that we have no "possession" of the bodies of men, no diseases entrusted to his manipulation, but rather that the evil *mind* of the traitor and the mental trouble of the Master himself is the only region of his activity and the sole indication of the devil's nearness or presence. There is no reference in John to "possession," but observe also that there is no reference to "leprosy," nor to the "issue of blood," nor to "dropsy," nor to "fever," which evil diseases our Lord healed in Galilee; but we learn that he did work many signs and works, the nature of which is not portrayed (ch. ii. 23; iv. 45, 48; v. 36; xx. 30). The absence from John's narrative of a specific reference to healing those possessed with devils may not indicate any metaphysical difference. In 1 John iii. 8 we are told that "he was manifested to destroy the works of the devil." We should be going too far, therefore, to say that John ignores them. The very phrase, "prince of this world," gives the flat denial to the inference drawn by the Tübingen school. The references to the devil under this title are comparatively few. In ch. xiv. 30 "the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in Christ." In ch. xii. 31 he is cast out of the earth by the submission of the Son of God; and ch. xvi. 8, 11, because he is judged, the Comforter will convict the world of judgment.

We learn from Christ that "he abode not in the truth;" and when "he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own" (ch. viii. 44); so that some hint is given of the mysterious event elsewhere referred to, that when the prince of this world began to be, he was *not* evil, but *became* so in the exercise of his own free will.

Thoma rejects Hilgenfeld's supposed discovery that the Johannine writer refers to the demiurge of the Gnostic Valentinus as the father of the devil (see sect. VIII. C. 3, and notes on ch. viii. 44).

The future of the devil himself is not touched upon in the Gospel; but the ultimate consecration of the world, and the expulsion from the world, and the final condemnation of the prince of the world, are firmly promised and predicted. As Reuss admits ('Theol. Chret.' ii. 474), there is no indication that John emphasized a fundamental, irresponsible, or inevitable evil, or referred the existence of evil to the decrees of fate or Divine predestination. In every case the fault lies in the *will* of the moral agent, and is the consequence of the rejection of advantage and of slight offered to opportunity.

3. *The Johannine teaching concerning the SALVATION of the world.* This comprehensive subject embraces: (1) The Person of the Saviour. (2) The nature of the salvation effected by him, as (a) Life, (b) Light, (c) Love. (3) The means adopted by him to accomplish the end proposed: (a) his own life (or example); (b) his revelation of the truth (light of men); (c) his love, in giving himself unto death, laying down his life for his sheep; (d) his bestowment of the Spirit—the true coming of himself to individuals and to the Church. (4) The method of human appropriation—faith, reconciliation, love.

(1) *The Saviour himself.* The Johannine teaching concerning the Godhead has embraced the main features of his Divine-human Person, which was at one and the same time the highest representation of ideal manhood, of God's conception of man, and the most perfect and exhaustive revelation of the Divine nature of the heart of the Father. The ultimate end of the Incarnation may well have been wider than the redemption or salvation of the world. It may be, and it has been supposed to include (even if man had never sinned), the fullest self-manifestation of the eternal God in a nature intended from its first inception to bear the full weight of the Divine glory (see Dr. Westcott's important essay on "The Gospel of the Creation;" 'Appendix to Commentary on the Epistles of St. John'). Whether it were so or not, the Gospel describes the (proximate) end of the Incarnation and of the sending of the Son of God into the world as nothing less than the salvation of the world of men. He came (not

to condemn, but) to save the world (ch. iii. 16, 17), and that all men through him might be saved. He is hailed in Samaria as "the Saviour of the world" (ch. iv. 42; 1 John iv. 14). "Salvation" (*σωτηρία*) is not a new idea invented by the author of the Fourth Gospel. The Old Testament constantly uses the word to describe the greatest necessity of man and the mightiest work of God. It is the most comprehensive of all terms adopted to express the beneficent action of God. It is the restoration of all the relations between God and man which had been dislocated by sin, and the conference of subjective conditions and experiences of transcendent preciousness and importance. It would be easy to show that this word covers all that is meant by justification and new life, by reconciliation, pardon, and sanctification, by adoption and eternal life.<sup>1</sup> The term "salvation" covers all that this evangelist describes by his use of the verb *σῶζειν*. He who is able to do this thing must possess lofty powers and Divine Personality. As John uses the word, it implies a terrific and hopeless condition into which the world has fallen. Darkness, ignorance, unsusceptibility, falsehood, rebellion, bondage, and exposure to moral destruction (*ἀπώλεια*, ch. xvii. 12), death without any prospect or principle of life. The serpent-bitten, plague-stricken, and dying hosts of Israel; sheep exposed to the ravages of the wolf, existence without any life, death in sin, death in all its defilement, shame, and mystery, are metaphors more or less explicit and translucent to describe the condition of humanity independently of God's saving grace. St. John discriminates between "sins" and sin, and shows that to him *sin* is not an isolated act of transgression. His definition of *ἀμαρτία*, is *ἀνομία*, or lawlessness (1 John iii. 4), i.e. antagonism to the known Law and will of God. It assumes in Gospel and Epistle the twofold meaning of concrete acts of rebellion and transgression, as in (ch. v. 14) "Go, and sin no more," and "He that delivered me to thee hath the greater sin" (ch. xix. 11); 1 John ii. 2, "He is the Propitiation for our sins," etc.; 1 John i. 9, "He is just to forgive us our sins." But it is also used as descriptive of a power or principle of corruption, a tendency to sin, as in (ch. viii. 34) "He that doeth sin is the bond-slave of sin," and (ch. viii. 46) "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" Whereas Jesus said boldly to the religious leaders in Jerusalem (ch. vii. 19), "Which of you doeth [keepeth] the Law?" This is the state of man from which Christ comes to deliver the human race, commencing with individuals. There is a positive objective work to be done in and for human nature by its Saviour, and there is inducement and motive to be supplied to perishing man to accept this objective work of his.

The sending, the coming, the descent, the work, the acts, the words, of the Son of God have all been conditioned by the desperate condition of humanity. It is admitted that in some sense he had always been coming, and had always been in the world, had been seen by prophets (ch. xii. 41) and testified to by the prophetic spirit (ch. i. 5); that patriarchs desired to see his fuller manifestation (ch. viii. 56), that the great Law-giver had written of him (ch. v. 47), and the entire Scripture of the Old Testament testified to him (ch. v. 39); but all this agelong and universal approach of the Logos to the mind of man had not disarmed resistance, nor did the darkened understanding see the brightness of the glory of the Father. So, before any further or final display of the purpose of God in the salvation of men could take place, "the Logos," says John, "became flesh, and tabernacled amongst us." The Divine humanity thus constituted was specially equipped for the work to be done. Every lofty name he bears or assumes has a distinct reference to the reconstitution, saving, and redemption of humanity; while the very nature of the changes to be wrought in human nature and individual souls corresponds with the attributes and perfections and offices that in the Fourth Gospel he is prepared to fulfil. Thus he is to save the world; to save those that believe on him from destruction (ch. iii. 16, 17); to set them free from bondage to sin, their hard taskmaster (ch. viii. 36); to provide, for whosoever looks to him with eye of faith, deliverance from worse than the bite of fiery serpent (ch. iii. 14, 15). He is "the good Shepherd," who has come to deliver from the fangs of the wolf or the malice of the thief who comes on apace "to steal, to kill, and destroy" (ch. x. 10). "I am come that they might have life." He is the Giver to the starving soul of man (ch. vi. 50) of the true food, of which, if a man eat, he shall not die.

(2) The nature of *salvation* may be summed up in three great terms, alike descriptive of the need of man and the character of the Christ and his work—*life, light, and love*.

<sup>1</sup> Essay on "Forgiveness of Sins," in 'Ecclesia,' first series, by the present writer.

(a) Salvation must be *life*, the possession of more than the transitory, ever-vanishing, always-threatened earthly existence which we are content to call by the name. It is a mode of being unmenaced by the ten thousand perils of earth and by the organized enmity of hell, rendered incapable of perishing, delivered from the tempter, and freed from the fear which hath torment. *Life*, not a diseased, paralyzed, and distorted existence, the source of endless unrest, and ever tending to destruction; but life in its wholeness and perpetuity—"life" independent of these local conditions and physical surroundings, and "more abundant" than can be realized in the flesh; "veritable," answering to its fundamental idea, a life which is proper to man as a veritable child of God; "eternal life," a life which flows on like a river abounding in its strength into the great ocean of eternity. "The living water," the spiritual life, the Holy Spirit himself, shall be in those who receive his gift of life as a well-spring which leaps up in boundless fulness and entire sufficiency for all human craving for ever and ever. The constant references made in the Gospel to "life," "eternal life," show that it was the synonym of the salvation which Christ came to give. It is more than existence, or continuity of an existence which had been forfeited. It is the blessedness of complete satisfaction, the continuity of participation in the very nature of him who has life in himself, and who "hath given to the Son to have life in himself" (ch. v. 26, 27). In the Logos is life, and in the Logos incarnate, "made flesh," is life (ch. i. 4, 14); "He that hath the Son hath life;" "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John v. 11, 12).

The record of the Gospel insists upon and illustrates the life-giving power of the Logos when made flesh. Thus he maintains that, though the temple of his body be destroyed, he will raise it up; and though he lay down his life, he will take it again, by the intrinsic life which is in him. Due relation to him is to secure "eternal life" (ch. iii. 16, 17, 36); he offers to give it to the Samaritans (ch. iv. 14); he confers "life" on the paralyzed man (ch. v. 9); and he vindicates his authority to do this on the sabbath by the position that "as the Father raiseth and quickeneth the dead, so the Son quickeneth [maketh to live] whom he wills" (ch. v. 21); and he predicts that the dead souls and dead bodies of men shall arise to life at his word (ch. v. 25-29). He supplies the means of life to the starving multitudes (ch. vi. 1-14), he protects from death his troubled disciples (ch. vi. 15-21), and then expounds his willingness to give himself as the veritable Bread of God for the life of the world. "He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever" (ch. vi. 51). The apostles recognized this lofty prerogative, and declared their unalterable decision not to leave him, because he had "the words of eternal life" (ch. vi. 68). In other imagery describing those who appropriate the Word and the gift, he said (ch. x. 28, 30) that they should not by any means perish, and they should have eternal life, and no power should pluck them out of his hand or his Father's hand, since he and the Father are one in essence and power to protect and bless. The life-giving is most wonderfully set forth afterwards as a concrete fact. The death of the body, the corruption of the grave, are no barriers, though they may be a concealment of his power to give life, and so he snatches from death and the grave the man he calls his "friend" (ch. xi.). He further illustrated his power to give life on the night of the Passion, by saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (ch. xiv. 19).

In the intercessory prayer he gives eternal life to those whom the Father has given him (ch. xvii. 2, 3). The final scenes record the victory he won over death in his own Person, and the pledge he thus becomes and gives to all who, whether they have had phenomenal proof of it or not, believe on his Name. The whole Gospel is written that *believing* we might have *life* in his Name (ch. xx. 31).

(b) Salvation, however, is more than *life*: it includes a further conception, which pervades the Gospel from end to end; it is synonymous with *light*. The antithesis of life, or of continuous participation in the nature of God, is *death*—death of body and death of soul, destruction, loss of privilege, insensibility to the Divine. The antithesis of *light* is *darkness*, equivalent to ignorance, corruption, impurity, evil. The *life* that is in the Logos is *light*. "God is light, and in him is no darkness." This is the great burden of the New Testament. All darkness is alien from his nature, whatever our weak sense or feeble intelligence may suggest to the contrary. The Father is free from all imperfection, and the glory, moral splendour, of his essential nature consists in this, that it is diffusive, radiating forth as unshadowed light in all places of his dominion;

the means whereby all moral agency in the universe is competent to know both himself and all things. The gospel is concerned with men, with the moral universe of men, and with the fearful possibility and fact that the moral nature of man has been alienated from the life of God, and that, though the life streams forth as light upon the universe, yet the free-will of man has resisted and opposed itself to the life of God, and "darkness" has failed to comprehend the unsullied beam. Salvation for man includes a piercing of this darkness; the sphere of death is conspicuous in that department of man's nature by which he comes to know (*γινώσκειν*) God. His very faculties were themselves arrested. His eyes were blinded. The irradiation of all things with which man has to do by the life of God failed to produce its legitimate effect upon him, by the prolonged indifference, the mental incapacity, the moral blindness, the judicial blindfolding, that had befallen him through sin. Moral death is mental blindness. This is the inversion of the Platonic thesis which charges all moral obliquity upon intellectual deficiency. So, though the Logos is in the world as life and light, yet the world knows it not. God is not in men's thoughts.

In the Logos is Life and Light. There is an eternal effulgence of the glory of God in the coeternal beam of the Divine Word. He is the Brightness of the glory of God, the express Image of his substance. St. John's teaching is that the Logos, when made flesh and when tabernacling with us, inhabiting the temple of the body prepared for him, was Light. The glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, shone thence upon all human life. This illumination, this forth-streaming of the omnific Word in a perfect life, is calculated to turn the darkness, the intellectual perversions and moral corruption of men, into light. The salvation which the Logos incarnate ministers to men is illumination. On more than one occasion Jesus declares himself to be "the Light of the world" (ch. viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35, 36, 46). Coming to him is called a coming to the Light (ch. iii. 19—21). Apart from the light that the Lord has cast upon the way which a man should take, he will not see the path, but, by keeping in his light, he becomes "a child of the light." The entire world is illumined for him, the darkness of death and the grave are pierced, the realities of the otherwise unknown, invisible world are revealed. The corresponding term to "Light" is "Truth," the adequate expression of reality, the veritable utterance of the thought of the Father. Weiss, 'Biblical Theology,' ii. 354, "*Ἀλήθεια* is not knowledge, but the object of knowledge; not therefore identical with life; but the revelation of the truth is the presupposition of it,"—Christ as Logos-made-flesh, full of grace and truth (ch. i. 14). "I am," said he, "the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life" (ch. xiv. 6). He is the Truth about God's essential nature, adequately revealing it; he is the Truth about man's ideal nature, as God conceived it and produced it; and he is the Truth about the relation between God and man, showing a unity of consciousness and will with the Father, which issues in the confession that he does always those things that please God, and knows that the Father hears him always. His meat is to do the will of God, and to finish his work (ch. iv. 34).

The conditions of adequate knowledge of God and duty and deliverance are provided in the simple fact of his being. He has come to bear witness to truth, as well as to be Truth (ch. xviii. 37; viii. 40); i.e. the Person of the Saviour is not only a revelation of reality in itself, but it illumines other realities as well. All who are of the truth do hear his voice (ch. xviii. 37). So great a light as his life is not only glorious and refulgent in itself, but it brings before the open and susceptible eye a world of reality not otherwise known. The light behind him is an opening of heaven; the light before him reproves all evil by revealing it in its true proportions. The effect of "walking in the light" is moral purity and conformation of character to the Light of God, so that those who accept this Light have none occasion of stumbling in them. So St. John speaks of believers as "being of the truth," as denying all that is false (1 John iii. 19; ii. 4); and, moreover, as "walking in the truth," and "doing the truth" (3 John 4).

But truth, objective revelation, the shining of the Sun of Righteousness, is not the only condition of salvation by light, seeing that the "darkness" of man is not a bald negation, but an unsusceptibility to light. Power is therefore wielded by the Logos incarnate to open blind eyes. The synoptists frequently recognize this as a feature of the Christ's work, and represent the Lord as restoring vision in various ways to blinded

men, as symbolic of the direct personal treatment of souls. In the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv. 18); in the blind man at Bethsaida, whose gradual cure seems to correspond with the gradual illumination of the disciples (Mark viii. 22—26); in the two blind men at Capernaum; and in blind Bartimæus,—the great privilege is sought and conferred in vindication of the prime condition of faith (Matt. ix. 27—31; xx. 29—34). In reply to the messengers from John's prison, he bade them tell the Baptist that "the blind receive their sight" (Matt. xi. 5). The Fourth Gospel, in one of its most characteristic and circumstantial narratives, sets forth the Light of the world as opening the eyes of one born blind. Christ does not even *ask for faith*, but he heals first, and then reveals himself as Son of God. The teaching of the narrative corresponds with the whole of the Saviour's work with humanity. The power of *vision* is conferred by the new birth (ch. iii. 3, 4). The writer takes explicit pains to reveal the entire moral of the cure of blindness, and regards this as the complement to the assertion, "I am the Light of the world." Salvation as light is inadequate and incomplete, unless with light comes also the power of vision. "I am come that those which see not might see," said the Light of the world. The special grace which is thus suggested is not the objective illumination with which his unique Personality floods the κόσμος, but the subjective work of his Spirit on individual souls, re-creating their dormant faculties, producing a new manhood, calling into being powers which from birth or by disease or folly had been in utter abeyance. This imperial exercise of the power to save leads us forward to the grandest definition of all.

(c) *Salvation as LOVE.* The first great utterance of the prologue is that the glory of the Only Begotten was full of *grace*, i.e. of unmerited, self-communicating favour. The sublime suggestion of the eighteenth verse is that he the Only Begotten was the eternal Object of an infinite love: "He was in the bosom of the Father." He very early made the supreme announcement that God loved the world (ch. iii. 16), and sent him forth as the expression of the Divine love. "God is Love," said St. John; "and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God;" "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is Love" (1 John iv. 16, 8). Jesus was reminded on grand occasions of the Divine love to himself; and he knew that the Father loved him, because, said he, "I lay down my life that I may take it again" (ch. x. 18). His most exhaustive and comprehensive self-manifestation was not of life or light, but of *love*. The whole of the Divine self-manifestation as set forth in the Gospel is a revelation of this the most comprehensive of all the Divine perfections, and is the adequate expression of them all—the supreme blessedness of giving, of imparting self for the life and joy of others. The other apostles grasped the same thought, and Paul held it not to sacrifice thereby, but to express therein the Divine righteousness. "God commendeth his love to us." Love of God shed abroad in the heart, and producing within us an adequate response, is one of the fundamental themes of the Epistle to the Romans (v. 5, 8). Jude tells us to "keep ourselves (τηρεῖν) in the love of God," as in a citadel and well-defended sanctuary, "looking [thence] for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21). But the chief burden of the Fourth Gospel is the love of God, and the manifestation of that love in power, in healing, in sacrifice, in death, in resurrection. The motive of the first miracle, though it be one of power, is love to his mother and her friends. The keynote of the discourse to Nicodemus is the self-sacrificing love of God. The self-humiliation of the well of Sychar discloses the vast compass of his love to men, that his great aim was the saving of others by the forgetfulness of self. The great miracles of ch. vi. 1—21 are displays of love to his disciples, and they become the text on which he proclaims the extent of his own self-sacrificial love in securing the life of the world. The love which saves the sinner while it denounces sin beams through the heated and angry discussions of ch. vii. and viii.; and it dictated the healing of the blind man, and it is also the stimulus to the good Shepherd to effect the redemptive acts which would save the scattered and imperilled sheep. The treatment of the family of Bethany and of the deceased or sleeping Lazarus is the very apotheosis of love. Jesus risks his human life that he may give life and cheer to the home which he loved. He weeps. He struggles with death. He wins by love.

The victory of love over death is followed by the first and earliest response of unbounded love to himself (ch. xii. 1—8); a token was given which has been the precious memorial of Christendom, and, by its imitation, the beginning of heaven upon

earth. He testifies his love unto the uttermost in ch. xiii. 1, etc., where the humiliation of the God-Man receives its highest sanction, and prepares for a most surprising and continuous display of the throbbing of an infinite love to his very own. His high-priestly prayer for those who have believed that he came out from God, was that "the love wherewith he had loved them," to the point of "laying down his life for them," might be "in them," that they might know that "the Father himself loved them" even as he loved the Son (ch. xiv. 21; xv. 12; xvi. 27; xvii. 23—26). The love for them is seen in marvellous display on the arrest by the temple-guards (ch. xviii. 8). The entire demeanour of the august Victim is the unveiling of an eternal love to those who were bitterly misconceiving it. The care of his mother, in his dying moments, expresses and intensifies the consummation of a perfect love. The whole manner of the resurrection lays special emphasis on the condition of mind which would most certainly appreciate and believe in the revelation. The highest revelations were made to the Magdalene, whose love opened her eye and ear to perceive the stupendous fact. The disciples whom he loved, and Thomas who was ready to die with him, were singled out to be recipients of his supreme revelations. The final scenes on the Lake of Gennesaret were for the last time the putting into human forms of the Divine self-abandonment of a perfect love.

"The Logos made man" is the expression of the supreme affection of the eternal God to man, heightened and completed by the response of human love; and the moral and spiritual result in humanity of the reception and response of love to God is, on the part of believers, love to one another. This is especially conspicuous when the curtain falls over the public ministry, and the Lord enters into familiar relations with those who have at length, for life and death, accepted the revelation of heaven and of God made in his Person. Thus love to himself is made the ground and reason of obedience to his commandments (ch. xiv. 15), and (ch. xiv. 21) love to Christ carries with it the love of the Father, and further manifestations of himself; and the surprising assurance is given that "we will come and take up our abode with him who guards and keeps the *ἀγάπη* of Christ." The abiding in the love of Christ becomes the initiation of holy joy (ch. xv. 9—11). The ruling condition, guarantee, and fruit of holy love is keeping the greatest commandment of all, viz. the love of one another (ch. xv. 12, 17). The supreme benediction for which the high-priestly Intercessor prays is that "the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them" (ch. xvii. 26).

(3) *The means adopted by our Lord to effect the salvation of men. How does St. John represent the Life and Light and Love of God becoming ours?* Most certainly Christ gives life. He is the Life of those who are united to him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." He vindicates his authority to bestow life upon those partially and absolutely deprived of it or in peril of losing it. His full authority to do this thing is reserved for the future, when the Son of man shall have been lifted up, shall be glorified, shall have re-entered upon the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Still he describes himself as the Vine-stock, of which the disciples are the branches, and the life in himself is to awaken and sustain their life (ch. xv. 1—10). He speaks of power to convey this life, to disperse this energy, through the personality of those united to him. "I am come that they might have life more abundantly;" "He that eateth me shall live on account of me." The union of his life with that of his followers is the special theme of ch. vi. and xv., and implies an exercise of *Divine* authority, and nothing short of Divine prerogative. The Divine Humanity is the stay of all believing men. As he is one with God, they also become one with the Father, and one in him. He is their Resurrection and their Life, to such an extent that whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never die, *shall not experience in dissolution what death means—shall live for ever*. The method he is represented as employing is a Divine giving to those who can and will receive the gift.

(a) *The shining of the Light*. We have already seen that his *method* of communicating *light* and *truth* to souls is twofold. He is *Light*, and he opens blind eyes to see this illumination, and all other things thereby. The constitution, therefore, of the Personality of the God-Man is the forthstreaming of eternal light on human life and duty, or human way and human destiny. This is not all, because of the opacity and dulness of human faculty, and so by his spiritual power he produces receptivity in the human subject. The Spirit will lead into all the truth concerning himself and all other

things, past, present, and to come (ch. xiv. 26; xvi. 13). The method of light-giving is the exhibition in himself of a perfect exemplar, which, though he is the Logos-made-flesh, and they are flesh, nevertheless they are bound to imitate. This is the high teaching of ch. xiii. 12—17; xv. 12 (see 1 John iv. 17; ii. 6; iii. 3, 16). It is also the theme of many passages in the Epistles of Paul and Peter (Phil. ii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 21; iv. 1). To realize this lofty ideal of life and light in human experience might seem and would be impractical and impossible, apart from the allied and co-operating suggestion that his life is actually given to the new humanity, and that he came by his Spirit to generate a new life in the barren stock of Adam's race.

(b) *The sacrificial death.* In the manifestation of the love of God to man there is a breadth and speciality of teaching which cannot be overlooked. The method of the love of the God-Man to man received one high and far-reaching development, and was accompanied by one stupendous consequence, which was a necessity, an order, an *ἐντολή* of the Father, which the author of the Fourth Gospel not only does not conceal but conspicuously enforces. The death of the God-Man is to him the indispensable preliminary of the full and even the unrestrained communication of life, and the exercise of his life-giving powers.

Reuss labours hard to exclude from the teaching of the Fourth Gospel all reference to the sacrificial or expiatory value of the death of Christ, and the Tübingen school of criticism insists much on the contrast between the synoptic and Pauline doctrine of the death of our Lord, and that of the Fourth Gospel. It is obvious that his death is not explicitly spoken of in this Gospel as a humiliation, but a glorification. Thus the corn of wheat becomes, by dying, the source of much fruit. The "lifting up of the Son of man" (ch. iii. 14; xii. 32) is somewhat ambiguous, though the evangelist and the Jews understood Jesus to speak under this term of his death and departure from the world. The glorious issues of the death of Christ so filled the mind of the apostle that the repulsive and humiliating features had themselves become effulgent with new glory, and he who had seen "the Lamb slain" in the midst of the throne may have not felt the shudder and recoil at the premonitory hints of the necessity, quality, and meaning of his death. Nay, more, we are ready to admit that the imperial majesty of the sublime Sufferer overpowers the features of shame and curse which were irrevocably blended with it. The death-scene in his case is a victory over death. His very corpse propels at once a life-stream for the healing and cleansing of the world. John is silent concerning the death-struggle in Gethsemane and on the cross, as well as the institution of the Supper of the Lord, and does not cite the special saying, "This is my blood shed for many for the remission of sins." The question arises—Does the Fourth Gospel ignore the piacular and propitiatory aspects of the death of Christ? Weiss (in his 'Biblical Theology of New Testament' (Eng. trans.), vol. ii. pp. 353, etc.) has well replied to Schenkel, Fromann, Reuss, Baur, who have in different degrees affirmed this position. Let the following points be remembered. He refers (ch. i. 29) to the language of the Baptist as having been the first and inducing cause of his own adhesion to the Lord. The Lamb of God (see notes, ch. i. 29) is the image of the great vicarious sacrifice portrayed in Isa. liii. 7, the victim wounded for the sins of others and smitten for the transgression of God's people, who bears their iniquities and carries their sorrows, by whose stripes they are healed. The sins to be taken away, cleansed by blood, are in the Epistle (1 John i. 7) sins that have been committed and leave their guilt and stain and curse on the conscience until they are cancelled; and in ii. 2 and iv. 10 the Lord Jesus is the *ἱλασμός*, the "Propitiation for the sins of the whole world." His death, therefore, in Johannine thought, was anticipated and explained by the presentation of the blood of the sin offering before the Lord. If all that John believed the Baptist to mean was that the Son of man would purify the conscience by the presentation of a higher standard of obedience, why did he not say, "Behold the Prophet or Servant of God, who by his life and preaching will purify the sons of sin, that they might offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness"?

However, from first to last the Fourth Gospel is written under the shadow of the cross, which, when the author wrote, had become irradiated with the crown of glory, and was illumining and saving the world. Continual anticipations of Calvary occur.

In the first cleansing of the temple Jesus cried, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The animosity that he aroused in some created an omen



which repeatedly led to the measures which might have at once culminated in his death (ch. v., viii., x.).

Twice over (ch. xi. 51, 52; xviii. 14) the evangelist refers to the words of the high priest Caiaphas, who unwittingly prophesied of one who should die (*ὅτι ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*) on behalf of the people, so that the whole people should not perish.

In ch. vi. 51 Jesus declares that he has not only come down from heaven, but will give his flesh for the life of the world. "As meat and drink sustain life, so his flesh and blood, which seem to be so separated by violent death, become the means by which the world, which has fallen under abiding death, is maintained in life" (Weiss).

In ch. iii. 16, etc., the work which the Son of man will be able to effect is to save men from (*ῥύσις* and *ἀπόλεια*) condemnation and destruction. The eternal life which he secures for those who believe on him is verified by the uplifting (as the serpent in the wilderness was uplifted) in the very image of the diseased and poisonous and sinful flesh, conquered, slain, and yet exalted to be the provocative of faith and the channel of the supreme love to a dying world.

In ch. x. Jesus speaks under the figure of a Shepherd, who is not only willing to give his life for the safety of the sheep, but who is actually preparing to do this that they may have life, and have it more abundantly. Reuss thinks that the metaphor conveys no vicarious or propitiatory idea, because a shepherd who dies in endeavouring to save his sheep still leaves them to the fangs of the wolf or the wiles of the thief, and because a shepherd by not dying is better able to save if he have courage to risk so much for their advantage. But let it be especially noticed that while giving, sacrificing, laying down his life for the sheep, the good Shepherd represents himself as victoriously clutching his sheep from the fangs of the wolf, and declaring that his dying arms are one with the everlasting Father's arms, because he and the Father are one. The allegory of the tenth chapter is continually dropped for the sake of the spiritual and transcendental truth conveyed by it. Those parts of the work of Christ imperfectly supplied by the imagery when carried out by Reuss, are actually introduced by our Lord when he says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." He contemplates death and resurrection, and a continued presidency and guardianship of the sheep for whom he relinquishes his life.

Apart from his death, the love of God to man would not have been revealed to the uttermost. Hence the uplifting of Christ in agony and redeeming might was the highest glorification of God, and a means of glorifying himself; for it was a condition of the ultimate glory of his resurrection and of his ascension to where he was before. We do not meet with the phraseology of "ransom," "redemption," or "propitiation" on the lips of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel; but the idea had entered into the thought of the evangelist, as we judge from the Epistle, where the *ἱλασμός* is referred to (1 John ii. 2; iv. 10): "Our sins are forgiven us (*ἀφένται*) for his Name's sake" (1 John ii. 12); "He laid down his life for (*ὑπὲρ*) us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John iii. 16); "God sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10).

It is clear from the valedictory discourse that the Lord's departure from the world, from the fellowship of his disciples on earth, was the great condition of his power to fulfil his great and mysterious promises. The world would rejoice over its temporary victory, but would ultimately be convinced of its sin and of righteousness and judgment by his going to the Father. It was granted that the disciples would have sorrow (*λύπη*), a travail-pang, but their bitterness would be transformed into joy. The whole address turns on this departure of his from the world as a necessary preliminary to their blessedness. Seeing that the evangelist has prepared the way for these great utterances, he follows them up by the tragedy of the death of the God-Man, and records subsequently an explanation of the mystery in Pauline phrase; it seems to us idle to separate the teaching of the Fourth Gospel from that of the synoptists or of St. Paul, and still less from that of the Apocalypse (see sect. VII. p. lxxxv.).

(c) *The rising again.* The teaching of the Fourth Gospel with reference to the method of salvation is crowned by the historical detail of the Resurrection. The life was laid down and taken again; and the evangelist shows the recommencement of the new and heavenly life in a form which is itself a new revelation of the possibilities and

mode of human existence, like and yet unlike the humanity which had secured the affection and impressed itself on the memories of his disciples. He reveals in his own Person some of the most impressive differentia of the eternal life. One with his former life, bearing the marks upon him of his awful death, "the Lamb as it had been slain," he nevertheless wields the power of the Supreme. He is ascending to where he was before, so that his disciples may thenceforth—by faith and independently of sight—"touch" him. He reveals himself and this higher mode of Being to the fervent love of the Magdalene, to the meditation and intuitions of the disciples, even to the honest and devout doubt of Thomas. He imparts the Divine Spirit and the heavenly commission; he takes command and superintendence of his Church; he rules the destinies of individuals; he bids them wait evermore for his coming again. These historical details of the death and Resurrection are incompatible with the mere phantasmal or docetic life of the Logos-manifestation in humanity. The evangelist was not inventing a romance, but professes to give the facts which, if men believe, they will know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; and believing, they may and will have life in his Name (ch. xx., xxi.).

(d) *The Paraclete.* The most complete manifestation of the love of God in Christ is the royal bestowment of the Holy Spirit, "the other Paraclete," upon those who would receive him. "The Father will send him in my Name;" "I will send him to you from the Father;" "He will teach;" "He will show you things to come;" "He will lead you [make a way for you] into all the truth;" "He will bear witness of the truth;" "He will take of the things that are mine, and show them unto you." St. John knew that the promise had been redeemed, and exclaimed, "Ye have an unction of the Holy One, and know all things." This coming of the Comforter would not be other than the coming of himself. The spiritual presence of which they would be inwardly conscious would prove to be a veritable return and indwelling of himself in their nature and in the world, even unto the end of the age.

(4) *The METHOD OF APPROPRIATING the salvation, which is light and life and love.*  
 (a) *Faith in his Name.* The Fourth Gospel is as explicit as either of the other records of the life of Christ, or as is the teaching of St. Paul and St. Peter, in the primary place assigned to *faith*. In the prologue (ch. i. 12), those that believe on his Name (equivalent to "receive" the Logos) receive (*ἐκφορέα*) "power to become sons of God." Belief in his Sonship or in his mission is the great link between himself and his earliest disciples, and it is the seed or germ within them of still greater and nobler communications of himself. Moral and mental surrender to his will is the test of discipleship (ch. i. 39, 41, 45, 50). The glory of his creative power, manifested as love, becomes the life of his disciples when they "*believed on him*" (ch. ii. 11). When they made the full discovery of the fact that his body (destroyed and raised again) was the true temple of the living God, "they *believed* the Scripture, and the word which Jesus spake" (ch. ii. 22). Jesus told Nicodemus that "whosoever believed in him might have eternal life." This is repeated in great variety of form in ch. iii. 15—18; John the Baptist repeats it (ch. iii. 36). The truth taught the woman of Samaria was of a more elementary character, yet she was enjoined to receive and "drink the living water," to make her own the offered blessing of life and truth. The Samaritans know and *believe* that he is "the Christ, the Saviour of the world." In both her case and that of her fellow-citizens, the "sign" that convinced them of this life-giving truth was the perception of his superhuman knowledge and his penetration of the secrets of all hearts. "He told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ?" To induce faith in himself was the purport of other "signs and wonders," though they ought not to have been necessary (ch. iv. 48; cf. ch. v. 36; x. 37, 38). The belief on him that sent him is the condition of eternal life, and transition from veritable death to life (ch. v. 24). The physical act of "coming" to him, surrendering human will to his Divine-human will, is often the synonym of faith, and is clearly identified with it (ch. vi. 36). This faith is the work assigned to men, "the work of God" (ch. vi. 29); and this faith will lead to a life that is the pledge of *anastasis* at the last day (ch. vi. 40). The eating and drinking of his flesh and blood, again, are strong phrases for this moral acceptance of his incarnate love and also of the significance of his sacrifice. The Divine drawing may be a necessity, is a preliminary, in every case; but he himself is the great Power by which, through the Son, the Father draws men unto himself (ch. vi. 65; cf. ch. xii. 32; xiv. 6, notes); and

"no man cometh unto the Father but by him." The climax of Peter's experience is, "We have believed, and have come to know that thou hast come out from God" (ch. vi. 68, 69).

Most significant light is thrown on the meaning of faith by the contrast between the open antagonism of "Jews," the misapprehension and "stumbling" of the Capernaïtes, and the worldly anticipations of the brethren of Jesus, who did not believe on him. There was a preliminary to full belief, and this was the purely intellectual conviction that his teaching (*διδασχῆ*) was the eternal truth (*ἀλήθεια*) of God himself. How was this mental certitude to be achieved? By a willingness to do the will of God (ch. vii. 17). Ignorance of the true nature of God and the real meaning of the *νόμος*, of the *αἱ γράφαι*, were the obstacles in the way of such recognition of his claims as, when made, would infallibly lead them to full moral surrender to his claims (ch. vii. 19, 28; v. 39; viii. 19).

Belief in him was declared to be the necessary condition of receiving the Holy Spirit (ch. vii. 37—39), and to be the antecedent of "following" him and consequent "walking in the light" (ch. viii. 12).

(b) FOLLOWING *Jesus, with its CONSEQUENCES*. Faith, however, from this point onwards, always demands this "following," such continuity of relationship, veritable *abiding* in him, and it is accompanied by corresponding consequences. Thus "faith" and "abiding in him" and "in his word" would prove—

(a) An emancipation from the bondage of sin. None but "the Son," who is "the Truth," can set men free from this bondage (ch. viii. 31—37).

(β) It will lead to *love*. The opposite of love to him shows that in the deepest sense God is not the Father of such souls. The unloving have not been begotten anew; they have not come to him that they might have life (ch. viii. 42). Truth ought, by the nature of truth, to induce belief; if it does not, it shows that those to whom it is presented are "not of God;" for as he said to Pilate, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (ch. xviii. 3). The blind man (ch. ix. 35) is asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and the issue in this case is even more than "love:" it is—

(γ) *Worship* (ch. ix. 38; cf. ch. xx. 28).

(δ) Faith is the great *assurance*, pledge, and sign that a human soul is one of the sheep of his flock, that follow him, and that receive from him eternal life, who will therefore never perish (ch. x. 27—29). As the revelation advances, Christ declares that faith in him ought to be equivalent to faith in the fact that he is the Conqueror of death, the Resurrection and the Life (ch. xi. 25). Faith in the Lord, notwithstanding his approaching death and burial, is strongly commended (ch. xii. 7, 8), and the following of Jesus will involve a hating and a denial of self-life, and a willing relinquishing of it for his sake (ch. xii. 25). And even this is not all. The Lord not only promises life, eternal life, a life independent of death, but a life *with himself*, a sharing with him of the glory which was his before the world was (ch. xii. 26; xiv. 1—3; cf. ch. xvii. 24).

(ε) In the sublime summary of the public ministry, in ch. xii. 44, etc., faith in a vision of himself is faith in *a vision of the Father* that sent him. Such faith means immunity from judgment. The awful consequences of non-faith, of the rejection of his claims, augments the solemnity of the prime condition. Throughout the valedictory discourse the key-note of faith is perpetually heard associated with these and other consequences, until at its close, when his disciples reiterate their confession of faith, the Lord seems to say, "Now then I can go onward and to my Passion and my cross with joy" (ch. xvi. 29—33). The greatest and most impressive of his beatitudes was that which followed the exclamation of Thomas, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have *believed*!" "These things, says the evangelist, "are written, that ye may *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that *believing* ye might have life."

But the antecedents and consequences of faith scarcely express the fulness of that appropriation of salvation on which the Gospel insists.

(ζ) Union with Christ, on earth and in the Father's house, is one of the sublime themes of the Gospel throughout—union with him in his Person, his sacrifice, his victory, his exaltation, his Divinity. The will of men lost in the will of God. "From his fulness of grace and truth *have we all received*," said John, when he wrote his prologue, "and grace in place of," and as capacity for the reception of more "grace."

(7) The union of his own with himself, even in his eternal life and glory, is a key-note of his teaching. Even the Samaritaness is told that the gift of living water should be in a man a fountain of blessedness and refreshment. The great Sower of the harvest-field, and those that reap, shall rejoice together (ch. iv. 37). The union with himself is pre-eminently involved in the strong metaphor, "He that eateth me, he shall live on account of me" (ch. vi. 57). Still more so in the solemn word, "Verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I shall send receiveth me" (ch. xiii. 20), even though he adds, "He that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." "The Paraclete whom the world cannot receive, will abide with you, and will be in you" (ch. xiv. 17). In other words he adds, "Because I live, even ye shall live. And ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (ch. xiv. 19, 20). Love will promote obedience; "And my Father will love you, and we will come, and make our abode with you" (ch. xiv. 23). The mutual indwelling of the vine and its branches explains the reciprocal relation—the branch abides in the vine, by the connecting link of faith; the vine abides in the branch, enabling it to bear fruit, by the flow and circulation of the life. As the stem and the branches form one vine, so he suggests that his own God-Manhood is incomplete without the living contact of those that believe in him with himself (ch. xv. 1–10). The intercessory prayer is charged with the same sublime hope, even though it involve separation from them. Separation, so far as visibility goes, will be compatible with the union which a head has with a body. They will still have his "peace," his "joy," his "love," his "glory" (ch. xiv. 27; xv. 11; xvi. 22; xvii. 22, 26).

4. *The Johannine teaching with reference to the future judgment and the future life.* We are bound to concede a greater contrast here with other and antecedent types of Christian doctrine. There are no parables of theocratic judgment, of final discrimination between the wicked and the good (Matt. xiii.); no casting out of the unresponsive guests into the outer darkness; no prophecy of the fall of the existing order of things; of the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place; of the confusion of the theocracy and the saving of the remnant; nor any august picture of the final judgment when the Son of man comes in his glory, to separate the nations and decide the destinies of the world. The judgment (*κρίσις*) of which Jesus speaks is "that men love darkness rather than light." The awful process is brought about by the offer of love. "Now," says he, "is the *κρίσις* of this world, now is the prince of this world cast out" (ch. xii. 31). The blinding of the foolish heart, the abiding of the wrath of God upon the disobedient, the perpetual discrimination ever going on and brought about by the forth-streaming of a Light which some neither apprehend nor walk in,—seems to take the place of the dread consummation when the Son of man should come in the glory of his Father and of his holy angels.

Yet it must not be forgotten that, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus does speak of "the resurrection at the last day," of "the resurrection of life," and of "the resurrection of judgment" (ch. v. 28, 29). He speaks (ch. xv. 6) of the burning up of the fruitless branches, pruned, cut off, from the living Vine; that those who refuse to believe in him will "die in their sins" (ch. viii. 21). Just as in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the unbeliever and those who do evil have Moses in whom they trust to judge them. "If I judge," says he, "my judgment is just" (ch. viii. 16). The world is to be convinced of judgment to come by the condemnation of the prince of the world (ch. xvi. 11).

We would not underrate the surprising contrast between the visions of judgment in Paul's Epistles, in Matthew's Gospel, and the Apocalypse, and, on the other hand, the searching inward work of judgment which the Fourth Gospel describes as constantly going on in the inmost nature of souls. The whole history of Christ is represented in this Gospel as a discrimination between man and man; a constant sifting of the grain from the chaff; a perpetual separation between the sheep and the goats, between those who see and those who see not, between those who only profess to be and those who really are the true disciples. We must remember that, when these words were recorded, the terrible drama of the visible theocracy, the obliteration of Hebrew nationality, had been long consummated. Much that had been predicted had been seen in awful fulgurous fulfilment. John had himself described these scenes in phrases drawn from the synoptic Gospels and from the earlier prophecies, and it would seem as though long meditation

on the word of Jesus made him linger in his historic narrative on the principles of judgment which are evermore at work, and to which the Lord had referred.

Moreover, in the Epistle we do find that the author anticipates an approaching climax of all this judgment (1 John ii. 18, 28; iv. 17). The Lord is coming, and those that believe ought not to be ashamed before him, but should have boldness in the day of judgment.

Reuss admits ('Theol. Chret.,' ii. 563) a difference between the view of the future contemplated by the author of the Gospel and of the Epistle, and some have pressed it into a reason for assigning the two documents to different hands (pp. lxii., lxiii.). There are, however, too many indications of harmony between the two writings to justify such an interpretation. Reuss concedes this, but imagines "the fragmentary residue of notions familiar to the author in his earlier life, which had not been absorbed completely nor perfectly repudiated by his mysticism." But are not the views mutually compatible and reconcilable? Is there not enough in the Gospel, in the passages referred to above, to justify all the solemn fear and sacred hopes discernible in the Epistle?

5. *The Johannine teaching with reference to the formation of a kingdom, the founding and training of the Church.* In harmony with the previous synoptic and Pauline teaching, Jesus, in the Fourth Gospel, is "King of Israel." He came to his own, and some, though not all, received him as such. As a Prophet and Master of the old theocracy he cleansed the temple. He declared that neither at Gerizim nor Jerusalem would men worship the Father. Though recognizing the patriarchs, the fathers, the Moses of the old covenant, he anticipated the time when all who were of the truth would hear his voice. He rejoiced that there were sheep of different folds who would hear his voice, whom he would bring into and make part of one flock. When the Greeks were anxious to see him, he broke forth into a great exclamation, "Now is the Son of man glorified!" He declared to Pilate that he was a King, though not of this world. The Fourth Gospel represents the very accusation placed over his head upon the cross as nothing short of the fact, not assumption, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS." The ironical testimony borne by a heathen governor to the agelong hope of Israel was transfigured and displayed in the agony of a suffering Saviour, in the dying and uplifting upon the cross of One who would thereby draw all men to himself. The fellowship in his death and resurrection, in his Person and glory, is to embrace all who believe on him through the word of the apostles. The union and communion of the disciples in mutual love is to be the most powerful testimony to his mission from heaven, and the reality of his spiritual presence.

The baptism of John is referred to, and we are expressly told, what we learn nowhere else, that at the beginning of our Lord's ministry the disciples baptized men into a general admission of his claims—into the confession of Christ, and the hope of One who would baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost. The society was thus commenced, but Jesus declares the supreme importance of birth from the Spirit, and of worship in spirit and truth. The true meaning of the well-known Supper of the Lord was illustrated by John, not by the record of the institution, but by the discourse in Capernaum, which lay deep foundations for a spiritual brotherhood of those who assimilated his flesh and drank into the spirit of his life, who could appreciate the Divine background of his human personality, and accept the fact of his sacrifice.

Thoma concludes his view of this great theme, "Christ is the Shepherd of the sheep, who only have to follow him to find rest. . . . He is the all-dominant Idea, the Light of the world, the Sun to which every eye must turn, by which all things live, and to which all things tend. The doctrine of the Johannine Gospel is throughout nothing less than a Christology."

#### X. ARRANGEMENT OF THE CONTENTS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The perception of the plan of this Gospel has varied with every theory of its authorship, and every hypothesis as to the occasion or motive which led to its publication. Augustine, Chrysostom, Theophylact, and even later writers who entertain no breath of suspicion as to the apostolic origin and perfect historicity of the Gospel, were content to ignore the question of its plan. It was enough for them that the facts came

within the cognizance of the writer, and that the words were heard by the credible witness. The order in which they are narrated was simply the order of time and nature. The motive stated in ch. xx. 30, 31 was all-sufficient, and was everywhere apparent. The Galilæan fisherman was innocent of art. He simply spake that he knew, and testified to that which he had seen and heard. Hardly an attempt was made by either of these writers to classify or arrange the contents of the Gospel.

Lampe (1724, Utrecht) was the first to propose a simple classification: I. The prologue (ch. i. 1—18). II. The narrative (ch. i. 19—xx. 29). This narrative was subdivided into the "public ministry" (from ch. i. 19 to xii. 50) and the "last acts" (ch. xiii. 1—xx. 29). This was followed by: III. The epilogue (ch. xx. 30—xxi. 25). The most important principle suggested here, was the strong line of demarcation between the public ministry and last acts of our Lord, drawn with respect to ch. xii. and xiii.

Bengel, followed to some extent by Olshausen, and even by Lücke in his first edition, classified the entire subject-matter that follows the prologue (ch. i. 1—18) by exhibiting the chronological sequence of the feasts—the three Passovers (ch. ii. 13; vi. 4; xiii. 1), the Pentecost (or Purim) of ch. v. 1, and the Feast of Tabernacles (ch. vii. 2). The ceremonies and import of the great feasts furnished our Lord with illustrations of his own Person and mission; but they leave the theme of the discourses and multitudinous detail untouched. Bengel drew some attractive parallels between the first week of our Lord's ministry (ch. i. 19—ii. 11) and the last week (ch. xii. 1—xx. 31).

De Wette, who conceived that the writer's main purpose was to exhibit the glory of Christ, supposed that in ch. i. the idea was set forth *summarily*; that in ch. ii.—xii. the same thought is set forth in *actions*; that between ch. ii. and vi. the glory is revealed in particular examples, while in ch. vii.—xii. preparation is made for the last catastrophe. The glory of our Lord then appears in all its brightness in ch. xiii.—xx.; in ch. xiii.—xix. inwardly and morally; in ch. xx. by his resurrection. Both Luthardt and Godet regard this as by far the most suggestive and beautiful arrangement of the material up to De Wette's day.

Baumgarten-Crusius ('Einleitung,' xxx. 11) divides the narrative portion (1) into the record of Christ's *works* (ch. i.—iv.); (2) his *conflict*, including misunderstandings of his character and word; (3) this is followed by his *victory*; and (4) by his *glorification*.

Lücke (in the third edition, 1840, of his 'Kommentar über das Evangelium,' vol. i. 183) does not subdivide ch. i. 18—xii. 50 any further than by notifying the advance of opposition to our Lord in ch. v. He sees, however, in the later part of the Gospel, in ch. xiii.—xix., the glorifying of the Father by the Son, and in ch. xx. the glorifying of the Son by the Father, both in his death-hour and by the Resurrection. This last contrast is fanciful, and in some respects might be inverted.

Schweizer ('Das Evang. Johannis,' 1841) added an important consideration, in making a part of the author's purpose to be the development of *unbelief*. I. Ch. i.—iv., "The battle is only heard at a distance." [We submit that it is heard very audibly, as in ch. i. 29, 37, 46, in the temptation of his mother (ch. ii. 3), in the criticism of the authorities (ch. ii. 20), in the distrust of Jesus (ch. ii. 24), in the misconception of Nicodemus (ch. iii. 4, 9—12; cf. ch. iii. 32), in the hostility of the Pharisees (ch. iv. 1), and the numerous misapprehensions of the Samaritaness, the disciples, and the lovers of signs and portents (ch. iv. 12, 15, 33, 44, 48).] II. The struggle breaks out in its violence (ch. v.—xiii.). III. The closing chapters detail the issue. Schweizer errs in not recognizing the part which faith takes as well as *unbelief*, and how the growth of both is a consequence of each step which Jesus takes.

Reuss ('Historie de la Theol. Chret.,' ii. pp. 392—394; 'Theologie Johannique,' etc.) limits the prologue to ch. i. 1—5, and from ch. i. 5—xii. 50 supposes the author *first* to exhibit an orderly representation of various Christian ideas *to the world*, which secures, however, in ch. i.—iv., an enrolment of disciples, and in ch. v.—xii. the selection of the innermost circle of his followers, to whom (ch. xiii.—xvii.) he then makes known, in practical and mystical form, what had been previously set forth in its speculative or polemical aspects. The third part (ch. xviii.—xx.) is, according to Reuss, a kind of pseudo-historic treatment of the *dénouement* of the whole: "Jesus remains dead to the unbelieving; while to believers he rises again victoriously."

In Reuss, 'Hist. Sacred Scriptures of New Testament,' Eng. trans., § 221 (1884), a slightly different arrangement occurs. I. Ch. i. 6—xii. (1) Entrance into the world of the

incarnate Logos, attestation of testimony, miracle, prophetic zeal, prophecy (ch. i.—ii.). (2) *Jesus and the world.* (a) *The world seeks him*; i.e. the people, the schismatics, the heathen, all do so on better terms than does scholastic wisdom (ch. iii., iv.). (b) *The world as hostile* (ch. v.—xi.), recapitulation and hint of calling the Gentiles. II. Ch. xii.—xvii., Complete contrast with the foregoing—love, secrecy, the favoured few, promise and prospect, victory in death, practical and ethical treatment. III. Ch. xviii.—xx., The narrative of the Passion, but only in small degree lifted up to the theological standpoint of the rest of the Gospel. IV. The epilogue (ch. xxi.).

Luthardt and Godet, in their comments on this scheme, appear to think that, by showing this exaltation of the ideal and dogmatic element, Reuss virtually destroys all the historic element, or that, by confounding the facts of the Lord's death and resurrection with a "mere mirror of religious truths," Reuss's theory would be condemned. But it should be remembered that Reuss avowedly treats the Gospel as a "mirror," or plastic arrangement of ideas—a series of reflections on the Person of Christ, and nothing more.

Baur's division of the Gospel corresponds very nearly with that of Reuss. (1) The first manifestations of the Word, and earliest symptoms of faith and unbelief (ch. i.—vi.). (2) The victory, dialectically, of faith over unbelief (ch. vii.—xii.). (3) The positive development of faith (ch. xiii.—xvii.). (4) The death of Jesus, being the work of unbelief (ch. xviii., xix.). (5) The resurrection of Jesus, being the consummation of faith (ch. xx.).

After the fashion in which the Alexandrines resolved all the histories of the Pentateuch into psychological facts and ethical relations, so, according to Baur, the Logos is that which is Divine in itself. It is set forth illustratively in Jesus, as coming for him into a consciousness which all elect souls may share. There is no essential fact accentuated as having taken place in the Incarnation, only the idea of belief in such a possible experience produced by the antagonism of light and darkness. The testimony of the Baptist to the Logos-light was a mode of finding the link of relation between the old and the new. Ch. iv.—vi. are the record of the first movements of faith and unfaith. Nicodemus (ch. iii.) represents Jewish faith, Samaria (ch. iv.) the faith of the world; subsequently the faith of the Jews is unveiled as nothing less than unbelief (ch. v., vi.), which is then dialectically refuted (ch. vii.—x.). After this the Divine element of Logos must declare itself to be the absolute life (in ch. xi.), and opposition to this reaches its highest expression. From ch. xii. to xvii. the Logos presents itself in all its fulness, but only to implicit faith. From that innermost circle the traitor is excluded. The idea of the Logos thus revealed must complete itself in its historical glorification. The death is a glory brought about by the unbelief of the Jews, to whom Jesus is dead. The Resurrection is the view of the Logos in the eye of faith; so the process of unbelief, as seen first in Nathanael's doubt (ch. i.), is seen eventually to be scattered in the triumphant exclamation of Thomas (ch. xx.). Baur regards the final section (ch. xxi.) by another hand.

The appearance of biographic fact is thus regarded as the mere clothing of the processes of faith, stimulated by the antagonism of unbelief. The object of faith disappears, because the incarnate Logos is simply a mental process, an ethical experience of the second century. The Son of God, as a Saviour, as life, light, and love, cannot, with Baur, be the object of faith. He is in his final glory nothing but pure absolute *idea*.

This survey of various efforts prepares the way for the admirable and penetrative representation of Luthardt. Two points especially emerge of prime importance: (1) the great change in theme and tone which is observable between ch. iv. and v.; and (2) the opening of a new theme in ch. xiii. Luthardt, however, emphasizes the historic or chronologic relation of ch. xii. with what follows. The final week, which is introduced as the sequel of the death-sentence recorded in ch. xi., certainly commences with ch. xii. 1. The subject-matter of ch. xii., as well as the tone and spirit of it, does, however, belong to themes which precede in ch. v.—xi., rather than to those which follow, in ch. xiii.—xvii.; e.g. the anointing refers to the animosity and deadly antipathies of the Jews then reaching their culmination, but it is a prophetic anticipation of the "burial." The incident of "the desire of the Greeks" certainly betokens the offer of the Messianic kingdom to the Gentile world, and reflects strong light on more than one angry retort in the previous chapters; but it is also closely intertwined with the mysterious agony

and death through which the seed-corn of the great harvest should bring forth much fruit. Consequently, it faces both ways. Moreover, it contains the anticipation of Gethsemane, and thus anticipates the agony and victory of the cross.

Luthardt and Godet disagree about the close connection of ch. xiii.—xvii. with ch. xviii.—xx. They are simply two sides of one and the same thing according to Luthardt. In Godet's view they are utterly disparate, and cannot be regarded under the one heading of "*Jesus and his own.*" If they are looked at in their union of idea, Godet is right in repudiating the title "*Jesus and his own;*" but if the whole notion be *love* in its uttermost manifestation—the *eis τὸ παντὲς* of ch. xiii. 1—then it corresponds with the *τετέλεσται* of ch. xix. The *pedilavium* of ch. xiii. is closely linked with the tragedy of self-abandonment that follows in ch. xviii., xix. The warning to Peter (ch. xiii.) and the expulsion of Judas are connected with the story of the treachery of Judas and the denial of Peter (ch. xviii.). The whole conception of the departure (ch. xiv.—xvi.) prepares for the manner of its occurrence, and the intercessory prayer for "the resurrection," the promise of the Comforter with the spiration (ch. xx.). But to let this pass. Luthardt is singularly happy in his perception of the dramatic unity of the whole book. "In the first part the threads are laid; in the second the knots are twisted; in the third the whole is resolved into the glorification of Jesus on the one hand, and in the completion of both faith and unbelief, and of the spiritual communion of the believers with Jesus, on the other." I. *The introduction of the Logos incarnate to the world.* (Ch. i.—iv.) II. *The struggle between Jesus as thus revealed and the Jews.* III. *The revelations of love in word and deed.* (Ch. xiii.—xx.) IV. *The epilogue.* (Ch. xxi.)

Albrecht Thoma, in his '*Genesis des Johannis Evangelium,*' has arranged the matter as follows in five sections:—I. *The significance of the essence and work of Christ.* II. *The work of Christ: Association and division.* III. *The conflict with the world.* IV. *FAREWELL commission and promise.* V. *THE HOUR: the glorification of sorrow.* *Appendix:* an outline of apostolic history.

There is no reason to conclude, even if we proceed to set forth in detail a more abundant classification of these discourses, narrations, and lessons, that the author of the Gospel needs to have strained a fact, or to have altered the chronological order of a single narrative, or to have invented a solitary revelation of the eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to the world. The possible point of view on which the evangelist took his stand was entirely justified by the history. He does not clash with the current synoptic narrative. All along he acknowledges its existence, and gives hints that he is aware of the charge of possible or apparent discrepancy, and by a side note or parenthetical expression he leaves room for all the additional matter that belongs to the Galilean ministry. Throughout, the synoptists are necessary for a right understanding of the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, there is so much of profound transcendental utterance and claim in the synoptic narratives, that *they* are to a large extent incomprehensible if the customary aspects in which the Lord appears in the Fourth Gospel had not been historically prepared for our use. We ought never to forget that the synoptic narratives do not, any more than the Fourth Gospel does, consist of sustained biographical treatment of the life of Jesus. Each of the Gospels betrays a distinct purpose on the part of its author to justify the *presupposition* on which it rests. Matthew discerns with vivid insight the *Messiahship*; Mark, the great features of the *Son of God*; Luke, the dominating grace of his perfect *humanity*; and John proceeds on the supposition that he was nothing short of, and nothing less than, all of these, *because* he was the *Logos made flesh*—the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The biography is neither exhausted nor completed by the fourfold representation. Each narrative abounds in startling lacunes, in blank spaces of time, of which a few solitary expressions or incidents only have been preserved. The portraits are none the less real because they preserve only specimens of the life-work of Jesus, characteristic moments in the great life, not the successive hours, days, weeks, and years of his sublime and wondrous existence.

The Holy Spirit of truth and revelation has followed here the great method which has been virtually followed in preserving the memory of the greatest men of our world's history. Many of the philosophers and poets of antiquity, of its princes, legislators, and patriots are preserved for us in a few scenes only of their busy and protracted



lives—in a few sentences only, by means of which their inner life in part expressed itself.

Should a biographer be content, in delineating the career of Luther, to paint with perfect accuracy three or four palmary events in his life, to provide the setting of three or four memorable utterances of the Reformer, which appear to the writer to represent the essential spirit of the man,—he ought not to be charged with inventing those facts or fabricating the sayings, even should it turn out that the events and words inherently possess a dramatic propriety in themselves. A description of Luther nailing his theses to the church door; his journey to Worms; his characteristic speeches on his progress thither and before the Diet; his language to the prophets at Wittenberg, when he burst from his retirement to confront them; his conduct during the Diet at Augsburg, and the death-scene,—would not constitute a biography of Luther. Yet should a competent student, who perceives in these events and words powerful expression of the chief momenta of Luther's mission in this world, elect thus to represent it, and confine himself to them, their dramatic relation to one another ought not to invalidate confidence in their accuracy and historicity. Other consistent hypotheses of the personality of the great Reformer might be framed which would not include more than one or two of these events, but might include other groups of sayings equally historic and revelatory. They need not be charged with being merely subjective creations because of this difference of subject-matter.

The Personality of the Logos incarnate, if such an hypothesis or presupposition be rational at all, could not have evolved itself in human life without evoking a faith and a distrust which acted and reacted on each other. The leading revelations of his own essential Being would be made through actions and words more or less obviously related. The unconscious poetry and dramatic effect of the revelation of the conflict and the victory must evince and evolve itself to one who reflects upon the whole effect upon his own mind of the life and ministry of the Lord. The dramatic unity of the whole is a testimony to the reality of the facts. Such a conception of the life, vindicated by the citation of its chief momenta, renders the testimony thus borne to Jesus the most remarkable fact in all literature. The Fourth Gospel is so interrelated in all its parts, and conveys such powerful testimony to what was consecutively unfolded, accounts so wondrously for the catastrophe, and prepares so fully for the final revelations of the risen Lord and strong Son of God, that little controversy remains as to its *unity*. No mythopoetic tendency can have produced such a drama. The whole is so harmoniously built up out of its several parts that a variety of authorship is hardly so much as suspected by the most resolute of its opponents. The vision is not one of many minds at different epochs, but of one richly stored mind at one consummating period of his own career. The elaboration of the details and the exhaustive presentation of great truths touching the work and person of the God-Man reflect in every verse the spiritual apprehension of one exalted mind. There can be no question that the writer wishes himself to be regarded as the near relative and most intimate friend and beloved disciple of Jesus. If the considerations already advanced justify us in holding that this writer was the identical person whom he represents himself to be, we have scarcely any option—we must believe that Jesus was and is the Son of God. If such a conception of his Master was prepared by an intimate disciple and one who knew that he spake truth, then in him we have "the true God and eternal life." Before making any attempt to grasp the representation in its fulness, we have need to take our shoes from our feet—we are on holy ground.

The aid to this task obviously available in the numerous arrangements of the subject-matter to which we have referred alone makes it possible to the present writer to propose the following scheme:—

#### I. THE REVELATION OF THE LOGOS TO THE WORLD.

Exposition of the fundamental nature of "the Word," and comprehensive specimens of his nature and method, with the twofold effect of his self-revelation. Ch. i.—iv.

1. *The explanation offered by the evangelist of the series of facts which he is about to narrate.* This is contained in ch. i. 14, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

But before he makes this assertion, he states—

(1) The pre-existence, Personality, and Divinity of the Logos. Ch. i. 1, 2.

- (2) The creation of all things through the Logos, as the Agent of the eternal counsel and activity of God. Ch. i. 3.
    - (a) Inclusive of the fact that he has always been and now is the Life, and therefore
    - (b) The Light of men. Ch. i. 3, 4.
  - (3) Throughout the entire history of the action of the Logos on man, the effulgence of the light has been encountered by the misapprehension of human darkness. Ch. i. 5.
  - (4) *The general manifestations of the revealing Logos.* Ch. i. 6—13.
    - (a) The prophetic dispensation recapitulated in John's ministry, with its effects, bearing witness to the Light, but not itself the Light. Ch. i. 6—8.
    - (b) The illumination streaming from the veritable Light before he came historically into the world. Ch. i. 9.
    - (c) The twofold effect of the pre-Incarnation activity, anticipatory of the complete manifestation in the elected nation and individuals. Ch. i. 10—13.
  - (5) THE INCARNATION OF THE LOGOS. Ch. i. 14.
  - (6) The testimony to this fact by the prophetic spirit. Ch. i. 15.
  - (7) The experience of the writer. Ch. i. 16—18.
- Close of the prologue.
2. *The testimony of the Baptist.* Ch. i. 19—34.
    - (1) He defines his own position, negatively (ch. i. 19—21); positively (ch. i. 22, 23).
    - (2) His testimony to the pre-existence and superiority of the Christ, with indications of place and time. Ch. i. 24—28.
    - (3) His perception of the fulfilment, by Jesus, of prophetic symbolism, in virtue of his pre-natal glory. Ch. i. 29, 30.
    - (4) The prime purpose of John's mission—to introduce him to Israel; and the special preparation by which he was empowered to do this thing. Ch. i. 31—34.
  - \* \* The incarnate Word recognized as SON OF GOD, LAMB OF GOD, BAPTIZER WITH THE HOLY GHOST.
  3. *The first disciples, and their testimony.* Ch. i. 35—51.
    - (1) John and Jesus. John directing his own disciples to Jesus. Ch. i. 35—39.
    - (2) The naming and first convictions of the disciples. Ch. i. 40—49
      - (a) The Messiah. Ch. i. 40—44.
      - (b) The theme of the Old Testament. Ch. i. 45, 46.
      - (c) The SON OF GOD, and King of Israel. Ch. i. 46—49.
      - (d) The SON OF MAN, the link between earth and heaven. Ch. i. 50, 51.
  4. *The testimony of signs to the glory of the Word who was made flesh.* Ch. ii. 1—iii. 2.
    - (1) The first sign, mastery over the old creation: sign of love and power. Ch. ii. 1—11.
    - (2) The second sign, supremacy over the theocratic house: illustrations of righteousness, power, and sacrificial ministry. Ch. ii. 12—22.
    - (3) Numerous signs in Jerusalem, at the Passover, with twofold effect—some yielded a momentary but untrustworthy allegiance; others knew that God was with him. Ch. ii. 23—iii. 2.
  5. *The revelation of earthly and heavenly things to one who knew that God was with him.* Ch. iii. 3—21.
    - (1) The conditions of admission into the kingdom of God. New birth of the Spirit. Ch. iii. 3—12.
    - (2) The truth concerning the Son of man and his sacrifice. Ch. iii. 13—15.
    - (3) Divine love and judgment. Ch. iii. 16—21.
  6. *The swanlike song of the Baptist.* Ch. iii. 22—36.
    - (1) Circumstance which led to its utterance. The ministry and baptism of Jesus in Judæa. The baptismal difficulty. Ch. iii. 22—26.
    - (2) The earthly and the heavenly commission. Ch. iii. 27—32.
    - (3) The consequences of accepting and rejecting the supreme revelation. Ch. iii. 33—36.
  7. *The ministry and revelation of the Lord to those beyond the strict compass of the ~~Hebrew~~—* Samaria. Ch. iv. 1—42.
    - (1) The contrast between Jewish unsusceptibility and Samaritan predisposition to faith, in the entire narrative, as compared with the previous chapter, richly prophetic of subsequent development. Circumstantial introduction. Ch. iv. 1—6.
    - (2) Revelations and misunderstandings comprised in the interview with the Samaritaness. Ch. iv. 7—26.
      - (a) The Giver and Creator of all asks alms, thus submitting to the conditions of humanity. Ch. iv. 7—9.
      - (b) The LIVING WATER offered and misunderstood. Ch. iv. 10—15.
      - (c) The heart-searching issuing in the perception of the PROPHETIC rank of Jesus, by the Samaritan woman. Ch. iv. 16—20.
      - (d) The spiritual nature of God and his worship. GOD IS SPIRIT. Ch. iv. 21—24.

- (e) **THE CHRIST**, as conceived by Samaria. Ch. iv. 25, 26.
- (3) Revelation and misunderstanding involved in the conduct of the disciples. Ch. iv. 27—38.
- (4) The harvest of the Lord's sowing, and the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD. Ch. iv. 39—42.
8. *The Galilean ministry.* [Summed up in one event, of great importance, as illustrating the superiority of word to signs and wonders.] Ch. iv. 43—54.
- Here the first great division of the Gospel terminates.
- II **CONFLICT WITH THE CHOSEN PEOPLE IN JERUSALEM, GALILEE, AND JERUSALEM AGAIN, FROM ITS EARLIEST MURMURS OF HOSTILITY TO THE FORMAL DEATH-SENTENCE OF THE SANHEDRIN.** Ch. v.—xi.
- \* \* The conflict brings out loftier claims on the part of Jesus, and divergent results among the people. The assault stimulates the self-revelation.
1. *Christ proved by sign and various testimony to be the Source of life.* Ch. v. 1—47.
- (1) A remarkable sign on a paralyzed body and unsusceptible soul. Ch. v. 1—9a.
- (2) The outbreak of hostility due to the breach of the sabbatic law enjoined by the new Prophet on the healed man. Ch. v. 9b—16.
- (3) The reply of Jesus to the hostile Jews. Ch. v. 17—47.
- (a) The claim of special relation and equality of operation with the Father evoking deadly malice. Ch. v. 17, 18.
- (b) Christ vindicated his equality with the Father. Ch. v. 19—29.
- (a) He is **THE SON**, and his work is a following of the Father's activity Ch. v. 19, 20a.
- (b) The greater works. Ch. v. 20b—29.
- (i.) The resurrection of the dead. Ch. v. 21—26.
- (ii.) The judgment of the world. Ch. v. 27—29.
- (c) The witness borne to these supreme claims. Ch. v. 30—40.
- (a) The Father's all-embracing (ch. v. 32, 37, 38), and including—
- (b) The temporary witness of John. Ch. v. 33—35.
- (c) The witness of the works. Ch. v. 36.
- (d) The witness of the Scriptures. Ch. v. 39, 40.
- (d) The effect upon the people of the revelation of the Son, and his offer of himself as the "Source of life." Ch. v. 41—47.
2. *Christ declares himself to be Sustainer of the life of which he is the Source.* Ch. vi. 1—71.
- (1) The supply of human wants illustrated by a "sign" of power and of his being the Source of all things. Ch. vi. 1—15.
- \* \* The misunderstanding of the sign. Ch. vi. 14, 15.
- (2) The mastery of the forces of nature in the control of wind and wave, a "sign" of love. Ch. vi. 16—21.
- (3) The sequel of the signs (ch. vi. 22—59), with the discourses at Capernaum, in which he offers himself as—
- (a) "The veritable Bread," "the Bread which cometh down from heaven," as well as discovery of the method of participating in it, and the everlasting life which those who feed on it enjoy. Ch. vi. 26—36.
- (b) Episode on the blessedness of those who "come" to Christ. Ch. vi. 37—40.
- (c) The murmur of the Jews encountered and aggravated by the additional claim that his *flesh* (humanity) is "the living bread which came down from heaven." Ch. vi. 41—51.
- (d) The conflict among the Jews as to the possibility of their eating his flesh, leading him to insist on special participation of his "flesh and blood," i.e. of his Divine humanity and his sacrificed humanity as the condition of life. Ch. vi. 52—59.
- (4) The twofold effect of these instructions. Ch. vi. 60—71.
- (a) The unbelief of the Capernaïtes, leading him to proceed further and predict the ascension of his humanity, to where HE was before. Ch. vi. 60—66.
- (b) The loyalty of the twelve, with a note of prophetic warning. Ch. vi. 67—71.
3. *Christ the Source of truth.* Ch. vii. 1—viii. 11.
- (1) Treatment of his unbelieving brethren. The hatred of the world arises from the truth of his testimony. His hour of manifestation not yet come. Ch. vii. 1—10.
- (2) Controversy among the "Jews," and Christ's first discussion with them. Ch. vii. 11—13 and 13—19.
- (3) Treatment of the ignorance and insolence of "the multitude." Ch. vii. 20—24.
- (4) Special perplexity of "some Jerusalemites," and Christ's reply. Ch. vii. 25—29.
- (5) The divided opinions of the Jerusalem people, the general multitude, and the Pharisees; the attempt on his life, and its failure. Ch. vii. 30—36.

- (6) The claim to be Organ and Giver of *the Holy Spirit*. Ch. vii. 37—39.
- (7) The conflict among his hearers, and divers results of this series of discourses. Fresh attempts on his life. The Sanhedrin and its officers. Their confutation. Ch. vii. 40—53.
- [(8) The *pericope adulteræ*. Ch. vii. 53—viii. 11.  
 (a) The evidence and counter-evidence for the genuineness of the paragraph.  
 (b) The plot against the honour or the loyalty of the Lord foiled with marvellous wisdom and great love.]
4. *Christ the Light of the world*. Ch. viii. 12—ix. 41.
- (1) The solemn and formal assertion. Ch. viii. 12.
- (2) The refusal of the Pharisees to accept such a claim on his own unsupported testimony, and the reply of Jesus based on the testimony of the Father, who was ever with him. Ch. viii. 13—19.
- (3) Controversies with different groups, ending in a partial admission of his claims by some. Ch. viii. 20—30.
- (4) The test Christ applied to those who admitted his testimony—true discipleship and freedom. Ch. viii. 31, 32.
- (5) The offer of spiritual freedom to the seed of Abraham provoked bitter hostility and misapprehension. Ch. viii. 33—46.
- (6) The I AM. The appeal to their father Abraham and their Father God led him to assert his anteriority to Abraham. Ch. viii. 47—58.
- (7) The conflict and victory. Ch. viii. 59.
- (8) The Lord reasserts his own declaration of ch. viii. 12 by a sign of his power to give eyesight as well as light. Ch. ix. 1—7.
- (9) The proof of the reality of the miracle, the antagonism of the Pharisees, and the persecution inflicted on the healed man. Ch. ix. 8—34.
- \* \* The conviction of the prophetic authority of Jesus produced by the sign alone.
- (10) The issues of the ministry of Light. Ch. ix. 35—41.
- (a) The vision of those who see not. Ch. ix. 35—38.
- (b) The blindness of those who are satisfied with their twilight, and the remaining of their sin. Ch. ix. 39—41.
5. *Christ the Shepherd of the flock of God*. Ch. x. 1—21.
- (1) Parable of the fold and flock, the door and the porter, the robber and the shepherd. Ch. x. 1—6.
- (2) Allegory of the door and the fold, in which Christ claims to be “the Door of the sheep.” Ch. x. 7—10.
- (3) The functions and responsibilities of the veritable Shepherd, and the relation of the Shepherd to the flock. Ch. x. 11—21.
- (a) The continuity of his Shepherd-activity, notwithstanding the laying down of his life. Ch. x. 16—18.
- (b) The twofold effect of this declaration. Ch. x. 19—21.
6. *The oneness of Christ with the Father*. Ch. x. 22—42.
- (1) The Feast of Dedication, and the excitement of the people. Ch. x. 22—26.
- (2) Christ's claim to equality of power and essence, and similarity of gracious operation with the Father. Ch. x. 27—30.
- (3) Resented and challenged, but vindicated by word and sign. Ch. x. 31—39.
- (4) The susceptibility of those who had been prepared for his Word by the early ministry of John. Ch. x. 40—42.
7. *Christ the Antagonist of death—a victory of power and love*. Ch. xi. 1—57.
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(B) "The outer glorification of the Christ, both in his Passion and resurrection." The Lord of all spontaneously yielding himself to death, laying down his life, taking it again, and lifting his disciples into vital union with the risen life. Ch. xviii.—xxi.

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3. The valedictory discourses. Ch. xiii. 31—xvi. 33.
  - (1) *The glorification of the Son of man*, and of the Father in the Son. Ch. xiii. 31—33.
  - (2) The demand which this glorification would make on the *mutual fidelity and affection* of the disciples. Ch. xiii. 34, 35.
  - (3) *The question of Simon Peter*, with the terrible response which broke the eleven disciples down into a passion of grief, followed by our Lord's consoling promise. Ch. xiii. 36—xiv. 4.
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- 5. Review of the difficulties attending the preservation and characteristics of this discourse and prayer.

B. THE HOUR HAS COME.

- 1 *The outer glorification of Christ in his Passion.* Ch. xviii. 1—xix. 42.
  - (1) The betrayal, the majesty of his bearing, accompanied by hints of the bitter cup he was prepared to drink. Ch. xviii. 1—11.

- (2) The preliminary examination before Annas, and hint of the full ecclesiastical trial, and of the weakness and treachery of Simon Peter. Ch. xviii. 12—27.
- (3) The Roman trial, presupposing the decision of the Sanhedrin. Ch. xviii. 28—xix. 16.
  - (a) [Without the Prætorium.] Pilate extorts the malign intention of the Jews, and dares them to disobey Roman law. Ch. xviii. 28—32.
  - (b) [Within the Prætorium.] Christ admits that, in a sense far deeper than his questioner conceived, he was a King, but that his kingdom was not of this world. Ch. xviii. 33—38.
  - (c) [Without the Prætorium.] Where, notwithstanding the clamour with which his protestation of Kingship and subsequent reserve had been met, Pilate declared him innocent of the charge brought against him. The Barabbas-proposal. Ch. xviii. 39, 40.
  - (d) [Within the Prætorium.] The unjust scourging, and crown of thorns. Ch. xix. 1—3.
  - (e) [Without the Prætorium.] The further protestations on the part of Pilate of his helplessness and innocence bring up the concealed Jewish verdict of blasphemy because he had claimed to be Son of God. Ch. xix. 4—7.
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- (4) The Crucifixion. Love unto the uttermost. Ch. xix. 17—24.
  - (a) The circumstances of the death. Ch. xix. 17, 18.
  - (b) The title on the cross. Ch. xix. 19—22.
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  - (a) Filial love—"Behold thy son." Ch. xix. 25, 26.
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- (6) The piercing of the side, with its significance—the final close of the life of earth. Ch. xix. 31—37.
- (7) The burial—the two friends, Joseph and Nicodemus. Ch. xix. 38—42.
2. *The complete glorification of Jesus in his resurrection.* Ch. xx. 1—31.
  - (1) The process of John's own personal conviction, by the discovery that the sepulchre was deserted. Ch. xx. 1—10.
  - (2) The manifestation to adoring love, answering to the first portion of the high priestly prayer. Ch. xx. 11—18.
  - (3) The manifestation to the ten disciples and others, corresponding to the great prayer for them in ch. xvii. Ch. xx. 19, 20.
  - (4) Peace, spiration of the Holy Spirit, and power to remit or retain sin. Ch. xx. 21—23.
  - (5) The manifestation made to anxious scepticism. The victory of faith by the grace of sight and touch. The still greater blessing on those who have not seen and yet have believed. Ch. xx. 24—29.
  - (6) The summation of the argument of the Gospel. "These things are written that ye may believe that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*" Ch. xx. 30, 31.
3. *Epilogue, answering to prologue.* Ch. xxi. 1—25.
  - \*\* The post-Resurrection life, corresponding with the pre-incarnate energy of the Logos.
    - (1) The manifestation of himself in the work of life. Ch. xxi. 1—14.
    - (2) The revelations to be made in the services dictated by love and issuing in martyrdom. The confession of Simon Peter, and the charge given to him. Ch. xxi. 15—19.
    - (3) The revelations made to patient waiting for the coming of the Lord, with correction of a misunderstanding touching the disciple whom Jesus loved. Ch. xxi. 20—23.
    - (4) Note of subsequent editors with reference to the authorship and the fulness of unrecorded traditions touching the words and deeds of Jesus. Ch. xxi. 24, 25.

He that in the beginning and throughout all time has been one with God, the Creator, the Source of life and light, the Giver of the Holy Spirit, is represented as becoming human flesh, and through that flesh manifesting the Divine idea of man. The Spirit is triumphant over the flesh. He suffers, indeed, from weariness and thirst, and from the temptations to use the Divine power always at his disposal for his own refreshment or for the establishment of a temporal sovereignty; but he uniformly resists every such subtle temptation. Elect souls see by intuition, and by the aid of the prophetic word and testimony, that he is Son of God and King of Israel, that he is the perfect Man,

the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Mere intellectual power, senatorial position, hierarchical authority, fail to perceive and receive that which more simple minds embrace with comparative ease. He opens the kingdom of heaven. He reveals the Father by the confession of his own Sonship and the character which he everywhere assigns to God. The grandest conceptions of all religious thought date from the language of this Gospel, with its Epistle. God is Spirit; God is Light; God is Love. The incarnate Word is the Baptizer with the Spirit. He offers living water to the thirsty and living bread to the hungry, and the blood (which is his life) to man, that man may live, and not die, for ever. By a series of selected signs he is demonstrated to have all power, all righteousness, all judgment, all sustenance, in his hands. He claims identity with the eternal light, and proves that he can pour such light upon those who are blind even from birth. He can give light and also eyesight.

His self-revelations are continually stimulated by the antagonism and carnal misunderstanding of his hearers. He claims to be the Shepherd of Israel, but a Shepherd who would lay down his life that he might resume it in the interest of the widespread flock, the vast multitude whom the Father gives to him, and who come to him for eternal life akin to his own. He grapples with death itself, and declares that he is the Resurrection and the Life. Dead souls and dead bodies in their graves should bear his voice, and live. The antagonism to these claims becomes a furious madness, and, while he is binding those who receive him into a compact fellowship which will survive his departure and transcend life and death, while he is promising the Paraclete and surrounding them with a new glory, his own people are plotting his death. Nothing short of death, the full extremity of human humiliation, aggravated by the malice of the devil, can give adequate or absolute expression to the intensity of his love to the men whose nature he has assumed. From this he shrinks as a man, but to this he voluntarily and majestically yields. At every stage of the humiliating process and aggravated curse of his death he comes forth with some more convincing proof of his Divine mission, that he was empowered to destroy death; and glorify himself in it and through it. His treacherous disciples are vanquished; his captors fall at his feet; his judges are either baffled by his silence or his answers; he condemns his judge; he transforms his crown of thorns by the cruelty of its infliction and his patient endurance into a crown of glory, and his cross into a throne. Death fails with him. He proves that it can have no dominion over him, and he takes possession of his kingdom. He creates a new heaven and a new earth out of this sinning and dying world; by the revelation he makes of his spiritual and glorified body, and of the relation between the two worlds, he satisfies love, he removes doubt, he hallows work by the ineffable sweetness of his eternal presence with those who believe on him. "The Spirit, the water, and the blood agree in one" signification, appeasing the conscience, cleansing the heart, and inspiring the whole nature of man.

"These things are written that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God, and, believing, that ye may have life."

## XI. REFERENCES TO LITERATURE AND TEXT.

Numerous references are made in the foregoing pages and in the course of the Exposition to the literature of the Fourth Gospel. My obligations to my predecessors are so various and abundant that they defy enumeration. Illustrious scholars have contended on opposite sides in this "battle-field of the New Testament." Many of these are most honourably distinguished for their learning, reverence, candour, and ingenuity. To their extensive research, suggestive criticism, and various interpretation I am greatly indebted, and humbly desire to do justice.

A list of the principal works and treatises on the authorship of the Gospel may be found in Dr. Caspar R. Gregory's appendix to his English translation of Luthardt's work entitled 'St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel,' and a select list of commentaries on St. John's Gospel is placed at the commencement of the second volume of the Rev. F. Crombie's translation of Meyer's 'Commentary on St. John.' These valuable lists were completed in 1875, since which time many notable dissertations have been published; e.g. Albrecht Thoma's remarkable work entitled 'Die Genesis des Johannes-Evangeliums, ein Beitrag zu seiner Auslegung, Geschichte und Kritik.'

1882; Dr. Edwin Abbott's articles on "The Gospels," in the new edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica;' Mangold's edition of Holtzmann's 'Einleitung z. Neuen Test.;' English translations of Dr. F. Godet's invaluable introduction and commentary (T. and T. Clark); the commentary and introduction by Canon Westcott, in the 'Speaker's Commentary;' commentary and introduction by Drs. Moulton and Milligan, in Schaff's 'Popular Commentary;' and by Archdeacon Watkins in Bishop Ellicott's 'New Testament Commentary for English Readers;' translations of Bernard Weiss's great work on the 'Life of Christ' (3 vols., T. and T. Clark), and of Theodore Keim's 'Jesus of Nazara;' and Dr. Ezra Abbott's 'External Evidence of the Fourth Gospel.' Further, a contribution to literary evidences, entitled 'Canonicity of the New Testament,' by Professor Charteris, D.D., on the basis of Kirchhofer's 'Quellensammlung;' and a commentary by Dean Plummer, in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, appear to me singularly useful.

I acknowledge great indebtedness to these works, as well as to many others that are referred to in the course of the Introduction and Exposition.

Whosoever and by whomsoever "the spiritual Gospel" was produced, it is a veritable prodigy of thought and suggestion, and it involves conceptions of the Divine, and possibilities of the human that are ineffably sublime. Its simplicity invites attention, its depth bewilders. "A great water" is it, where an infant can wade, and where the mightiest craft can float, do business, and ride at anchor. Its metaphysic bridges the chasm between thought and reality. The spiritual becomes the eternal. The philosophy of the union of the human to the Divine has never been conceived with such practical force and astounding realism. All this would be true, if it be only the dream of some divine of the second century, more profound than Plato, more terrible than Æschylus, more sympathetic than Pascal, more mystic than Boehmen, more self-annihilating than Buddha, and of one albeit who has left no name behind him.

But if the book be what it professes to be, the record of a positive experience, a selection and arrangement of the memories of the disciple whom Jesus loved, then, without any question or exaggeration, it is the most inestimably precious fragment of all recorded history. This is the deep conviction the Gospel has inspired in successive ages, and this conclusion is forced upon many of us by a candid perusal of all that has been written with the view of shattering it.

One word concerning the text and the English translation presented in these volumes. Every place has been noted where the Revised Text of 1881 has deviated from the Textus Receptus, or from the well-known text of the eighth edition of Tischendorf, or from those of Tregelles, and of Westcott and Hort. Some of the principal authorities on which these distinguished critics have in the main relied will be found in the footnotes. A few of the more celebrated texts, such as ch. i. 28; v. 3—5; vii. 53—viii. 12, have been discussed at greater length.

Deviations from the Revised Version have been admitted into the translation with the view of exhibiting a closer approach to the exact force of certain sentences and words. They are not offered as revision of the Revisers' work, but as moving along the lines of exegetical and interpretative comment. The Hebrew, Greek, and Roman letters represent the uncial manuscripts, usually signified by them, and the Arabic numerals indicate the cursive manuscripts cited by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, Meyer, Alford, Godet, and others. The versions, Fathers, and other materials of judgment are indicated in a sufficiently explicit manner—the critical notes of Meyer and Alford and Dr. Weymouth's composite text have been carefully observed.

\* \* \* I desire especially to record my gratitude to the Rev. William Henry Beckett, of Stebbing, for the valuable help he has afforded to me in bringing the work through the press, and for other important services and suggestions.





# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

## EXPOSITION.

### CHAPTER I.

THE title of the book is differently given in the manuscripts and ancient versions, and the differences are so considerable that they cannot be referred to the original text. The simplest form of the title is found in  $\aleph$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\delta$ , and is nothing more than "according to John,"  $\text{KATA IOANNHN}$  ( $\beta$  gives only one  $\aleph$  in John's name, but  $\aleph$  two); and this is followed by the Vulgate and Syriac as a running title. The immense proportion of the uncials— $\aleph$ ,  $\text{C}$ ,  $\text{E}$ ,  $\text{F}$ ,  $\text{G}$ ,  $\text{L}$ , and eight or nine others—read "Gospel according to John" ( $\text{Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάννην}$ ). This is followed by Tregelles, Lachmann, Alford. The T.R., with a large number of manuscripts, reads, "The Gospel according to John;" and in Stephen's third edition the word "holy" occurs before "Gospel." The cursives 69, 178, 259, read  $\text{Εὐαγγέλιον ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην}$ . Some cursives read, "Of the (holy) Gospel according to John." The printed texts of the Peschito Syriac have *Evangelium sanctum prædicationis Johannis præconis*. The Revisers, with T.R., have placed  $\text{Τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην Εὐαγγέλιον}$  as their title.

The phrase, "according to," has been thought by some to suggest a type of doctrine or teaching with which the document might be supposed to harmonize, and therefore to set aside the idea of personal authenticity by its very form. This interpretation, seeing it applies to Mark and Luke as well as to John and Matthew, would lose its meaning; for Mark and Luke, by numerous

traditional notices, have been continuously credited, not with having personally set any special type of doctrine before the Church, but as having been respectively the interpreter of Peter or Paul. Consequently the meaning of the phrase compels us to ask whether the word "Gospel" or "Holy Gospel" did in the first instance refer to the book at all. It is not "John's Gospel" that is intended, but the good news or glad tidings of God related by John, of which this and similar titles speak. Moreover, numerous instances occur where the  $\text{κατὰ}$  is similarly used to denote authorship. Thus "The Pentateuch according to Moses," "The History according to Herodotus," "The Gospel according to Peter," are titles which in every case are meant to suggest the idea of authorship (Godet). We cannot imagine that any other implication was intended by this ancient superscription.

Each of the evangelists starts with a grand "presupposition," i.e. main thesis, of his own, expressed with more or less of explicitness, which it becomes his obvious purpose to sustain.

This main thesis is set forth in the first sentences of each of the synoptists. Thus MARK opened with the memorable words, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God."<sup>1</sup> From the first

<sup>1</sup> The text,  $\text{ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῦ Εὐαγγερίου}$ , Mark i. 1, is not rejected by Tregelles, nor Lachmann, nor R.T., though omitted by Tischendorf (8th edit.). It is found in  $\aleph^2$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\text{L}$ ,  $\text{ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῦ Εὐαγγερίου}$ ,  $\aleph$ ,  $\text{E}$ ,  $\text{F}$ ,  $\text{G}$ , and many other uncials.

he refers to the prophetic anticipations and historic realization of glad tidings uttered by the Lord, and he based all his teaching on the fact that Jesus Christ was SON OF GOD. MATTHEW, who wished to establish the Lord's special claim to Messiahship, and his official right to the throne of David, began with a genealogical proof of the Lord's descent from David and Abraham. LUKE, who aimed throughout to illustrate the Divine humanity, and to build his narrative on historic facts and chronological data, took up his story with the birth of the Baptist, and, in conjunction with his baptizing of Jesus, presents a lineal genealogy of the supposed father (and probably of the mother) of Jesus, through the line of Nathan to David, thence from David to Abraham, and finally to Adam, the first son of God. In his prologue Luke indicated the biographical use he had made of the material in his hands, and of the personal knowledge he had acquired, and that he aimed to set forth the grounds of security that existed for the things most fully believed by the Church (Luke i. 1—4).

The fourth evangelist was as earnestly set upon giving proof of the *Messiahship* of Jesus as Matthew was (see ch. xx. 31), and as resolved to emphasize the complete humanity of the Son of God as even Luke himself was (see ver. 14, and all the many signs of the Saviour's resemblance to his brethren, and sympathy with their sufferings and joys—ch. ii. 1; iv. 6; v. 13, 14; xi. 5, 35, etc.). But John had felt more deeply than many of the apostles the effulgence of the Father's glory which gleamed in the face of Jesus Christ. John had heard in the words of Jesus the veritable voice of the living God; "The Word of the Lord (*ὁ Λόγος Κυρίου*) came to him" in the speech (*λαλῶν*) of Jesus. There was a Divineness about the mission of the Lord which deeply impressed this evangelist—that Jesus had come in a special sense from God, that he was the Giver of eternal life and the Author of eternal salvation, and that he had the "form of God," though in the likeness of men. John's mind revolved all the truth which, long before this prologue or introduction was written, had been proclaimed by Paul and the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, in every varying

phrase. It was in harmony with the whole purpose of his Gospel that he should begin it before the baptism, before the birth, before the conception, of the Lord Jesus; that he should press back in thought to the Divine activity itself—to those ideas of the older revelation which, though not in conflict with the pure monotheism of the Hebrew Scriptures, involved the veritable preparation for the stupendous reality, for the supreme tragedy, for the Divine kingdom which had evolved itself under his very eyes. He looked back into the past, nay, he gazed out of time into eternity; he looked up from the miraculous conception to that holy thing which was conceived in the womb of humanity; he endeavoured to set forth that form of God which could alone become "flesh" and tabernacle among men; and which, though it did this, did not destroy the unity of Deity, but confirmed and established it. He was not slow to reflect on all the methods in which God had ever come near to men, nor could he believe that God Incarnate had never foreshadowed his presence with men, or his manifestation to them, before his own day and hour. When the old man was at Ephesus, many dangerous speculations were rife. Some denied that Christ had ever come in the *flesh* at all, and said that so Divine a presence as his was no objective reality—was allied to the *Docetic* "seeming" manifestations made to the patriarchs of the Old Testament. Jesus was to them a *theophany*, not a living Man. Now, we learn from the First Epistle that such a thesis was, in the opinion of John, the quintessence of antichrist. Others, again, had speculated about the emanations of Deity, until a new mythology was beginning to hover on the borderland between Christendom and heathendom. Essenic and Ebionitic errors had grieved him. At length the moment arrived when the "Son of Thunder," who saw all the glory of the risen Lord, all the majesty of his triumphant reign, uttered these opening words, replying, in every sentence, to one or other of these misconceptions of his Lord's Person. And he proceeded to lay a simple basis deep and strong enough to support the facts upon which the faith of the Church was resting. Men had come veritably to believe that *they* were

children of God, and had been generated as such by the will of God, and, if children, that they were heirs of God through Jesus Christ (Rom. viii. 16, 17; Gal. iii. 26). "Grace and truth" were lighting up broken and bewildered hearts when they accepted the reality of the Divine manhood of Jesus, and something better than the mere speculations of the schools of Palestine, Alexandria, or Ephesus was needed in order to explain (as he, the beloved disciple saw it) the mystery of the life of Christ. That which he laid down as the solution of the problem of "the beginning of the Gospel" is called the prologue of this Gospel. Even apart from the inspiration which breathes through it, no passage in literature can be cited which has exercised a more powerful influence upon the thought of the last eighteen hundred years than that which sets forth John's fundamental ideas concerning the essence and character, the idiosyncrasy and the energy, of the Divine fulness which dwelt in Jesus.

The question has been asked—Where does the prologue end? M. Reuss strongly presses the view that the proem terminated with the fifth verse, and that with the sixth the apostle commenced his historical recital. He urges that there is no break from the sixth to the eighteenth verse; that in this paragraph the author sets forth the general effect of the testimony of the historical Baptist to Jesus; and that, in consequence of it, a limited number of individuals were led to recognize (1) the Divine nature of the Word manifested in the flesh, (2) the truth of the assertions of the Baptist, (3) the radical distinction between Moses and Christ, (4) the fact that the true knowledge of God can only be obtained by the mediation of the latter. Some preliminary advantage is thus secured by the critic who seeks to ally this paragraph with the rest of the history, and to impute to the whole Gospel, as well as to the passage in question, the character of a theological or didactic romance. The enormous majority of all scholars, while recognizing new points of departure at ver. 6, and again at vers. 14—18, do not admit that the evangelist's preliminary representations or presuppositions have come to a pause until he reached the sublime utterance which points so obviously back to ver. 1, "No

one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." From the first verse to the eighteenth the evangelist revolves around the fundamental idea of "the Word which was with God and was God." But his aim is to show how the Word came into relations with man, and how man may come into relations with the Godhead through him who was manifested in the flesh in all the fulness of grace and truth.

An obvious method of this author in the Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse shows that he was wont to return upon thoughts which he had previously uttered, yet at the same time doing so in fresh cycles and with added meanings (see Introduction). The large spiral of his meditations sweeps at first round the entire region of "all things" which have their centre in the "Word of God:" "All things came into being through him." Then he formally discriminates between "things" and "forces," and especially indicates the relation of "the Word" to the energies and blessedness of the entire universe of sentient and responsible beings which derive all their "life" from the "life that is in him," and their "light" from that "life," indicating, as he proceeds, the presence of the antagonism to the light and life displayed by our imperfect and damaged humanity (vers. 1—5). Here the entire testimony of prophecy—gathered up in the person of an historic man, John Baptist—is broadly characterized, and some conception of the aid which revelation and inspiration have given to men to recognize the light when they see it, and to hear the voice of the Lord God while it speaks. The entire function of prophecy is discriminated from the light-force at work in every living man. The special aid given to the holy, prepared, and selected race, by the manner of his self-revelations brings the spiral thought round into the region of the intensified darkness of those who refuse the brightest light (vers. 9—11), so that ver. 11 corresponds with ver. 5. Vers. 12, 13 pause in the region of light. Some souls are at least transformed into the light, become conscious of a Divine generation, are born (through faith), independently of all earthly, national, or sacramental means, into the same kind of relation to God that has from eternity been enjoyed by the Word

At this point a novel revolution of thought is commenced, characterized by more intense brilliancy and efficacy, because revealed in a narrower range of fact. He touches the very focus and centre of Divine manifestation, when he says, "And the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us." "The Word" did not become "all things," nor was he *identified* with *life*, still less with *light*. The wide radiance and glorious glancing of the light was not identified with the objects on which through prophetic agencies it alighted. The *ἁγία*, the special race of light-bearers, were not, even in their highest form of reciprocity, incarnations of the Word. Neither conscience, nor prophecy, nor Shechinah-glory was of the substance or essence of "the Word," although all the energy of each of these was and is and ever will be the shining of the primal light on humanity.

This is the theory of the writer of this prologue, but his chief contribution to the sum of human thought is that "this Word became flesh." Having announced this stupendous fact, the author relates the evidence of his own personal, living experience; and he records his invincible assent to this unique and central glory of Divine manifestation. This at once leads to a few comprehensive antitheses drawn between the Incarnation and all the most illustrious and luminous of previous revelations. Just as vers. 6, 7 revealed the difference between prophecy and the "light of men," so, having come to this focal point of splendour, prophecy again speaks in the person of the Baptist; and ver. 15 cites the highest testimony to the supreme rank of the incarnate God above the greatest of the teachers of men. In ver. 16 the apostle refers to the Incarnate Word as the Source of all apostolic emotions and life. Through *him*, and not from the mere teachings of prophecy or conscience, have we all received grace and truth. Then, sweeping back to the grandest epoch-making man and moment of all past history, Moses himself appears to shine only like the light of a waning moon in the advent of the dawn. More than that; neither Adam in Paradise, nor Noah gazing on the averted bow, nor Abraham at Moriah, nor Jacob at Peniel, nor Moses in the cleft of the rock, nor Elijah at Horeb, nor Isaiah in the temple,

nor Ezekiel at the river of Chebar, have ever seen, in the sense in which Jesus saw, the face of the Father. The only begotten Son who was with God and was God, and in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. The entire proem does not cease till it reaches this triumphant peroration. Detailed exegesis of the passage can alone justify this estimate of the significance of the prologue. Different commentators have divided it somewhat differently, and many have drawn too sharp a distinction between the pre-incarnation life of the Logos, and the historical, theocratic, or ecclesiastical manifestation. Surely that which the eternal Logos was before his manifestation and before the humiliation of the infinite love, he was and must have been during the human life of Jesus, he must be now, and he must ever be. In other words: The Word, who was in the beginning with God, is still "with God." All life is continually the effluence of one of his infinite energies; all light is the effluence of that bright essence uncreate. He is still coming "to his own," and "they receive him not." The processes described in vers. 6—13 have never ceased; nay, they are indeed more conspicuous than they ever were before in the ministry of the Word, but they have not exhausted nor diminished one iota of the stupendous activity of the eternal, creative, revealing Logos.

The first part of the Gospel, consisting of ch. i.—iv., we have already described as

## I. THE REVELATION OF THE LOGOS TO THE WORLD.

Vers. 1—18.—1. *The hypothesis framed by the evangelist to account for the series of facts which he is about to narrate is seen especially in ver. 14; but before asserting this great fact that the Word was made flesh, he proceeds to show (1) The pre-existence, personality, and Divinity of the Logos.*

Ver. 1.—In the beginning was the Word. From early times expositors have perceived that the evangelist essayed here a comparison with the *ἐν ἀρχῇ* ("in the beginning") of the first verse of the Book of Genesis. This can hardly be doubted; but the resemblance immediately ceases or is transformed into an antithesis; for whereas the Mosaic narrative proceeds to indicate the beginning of the creation and of time by saying, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," this passage asserts that the Word then *was*. He was

neither created, nor did he then begin to be. Consequently, there is no reason to gather from this passage the temporal origin of "the Word," or from the first verse of Genesis to argue the eternity of matter. The writer here shows that he was profoundly impressed by the Lord's own self-consciousness which permitted his disciples to believe in a personal Being and glory "before the world was," and "before the foundation of the world" (ch. xvii. 5, 24). The idea of existence before the world was is attributed to the Divine (Sophia or) wisdom (Prov. viii. 23 and elsewhere; 1 Epist. i. 1). The same apostle speaks moreover of "that which was (*ἐν' ἀρχῇ*) from the beginning," but has been manifested to us. The interpretations which made the *ἀρχή* mean, with Cyril, the Divine "Father;" the Valentinian notion that *ἀρχή* was a distinct hypothesis, distinct from the Father or from the Logos; Origen's notion that it meant the "Divine Wisdom;" the Socinian view that it referred to "the beginning of the preaching of the gospel;"—are not now seriously maintained. "The beginning of time" launches the mind into the abyss of the *eternal now*. At that starting-point of all creation and all Divine manifestation, "the Word *was*." It would be difficult to express in human speech more explicitly the idea of eternal existence. In Greek usage and philosophy the term ΛΟΓΟΣ sustained the double sense of reason or thought immanent in the supreme Godhead (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος), and also of "speech" or "word" (λόγος προφορικός). Attempts have often been made to identify the λόγος of John with the former phase of its meaning common to Plato or Philo, and to find in the prologue the metaphysical speculations of the Alexandrine school—to identify the λόγος with the Philonic conception of the κόσμος νοητικός, with the Divine "idea of all ideas," the archetype of the universe, the personality of God personified, or the Divine self-consciousness. But Philo's entire system of philosophy by which he tried to explain the creation of the world, his theory of the Logos which was abhorrent to and entirely incapable of incarnation, which was based on a thorough-going dualism, which was significantly reticent as to the Messianic idea, and knew nothing of the hopes or national anticipations of Israel, was not the source either of John's revelation or nomenclature (see Introduction). The disciple of the Baptist and of Jesus found in *Holy Scripture* itself both the phraseology and the idea which he here unfolds and applies. The New Testament writers never use the term *Logos* to denote "reason," or "thought," or "self-consciousness," but always denote by it "speech," "utterance," or "word"—

the forthcoming, the clothing of thought, the manifestation of reason or purpose, but neither the "thought," nor the "reason," nor the "purpose" itself. The term is used here without explanation, as though it would be well understood by its readers. Numerous explanations have been offered in later times, which are far from satisfactory. Thus Beza regarded the term as identical with *ὁ λεγόμενος*, "the Promised One"—the Personage spoken of by the prophets. This, even with Hofmann's modification of it, viz. "the Word of God, or Gospel, the great theme of which is the personal Christ," breaks to pieces as soon as it is referred to the various predicates which follow, and especially to the statement of ver. 14, that "the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled amongst us." Readers of the Old Testament would not forget that, in the record of the creation in Gen. i., the epochs of creation are defined eight times by the expression, "And God said." The omnific Word uttered itself in time, and thus called into being "light" and "life" and "all things," and gave birth to man. The record thus preserved is confirmed by the corresponding teaching of the Psalms: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 21; Ps. xxxiii. 6; cvii. 20; cxlviii. 5; Isa. lv. 10, 11). Moreover, the Scripture in the Book of Proverbs (viii., ix.), Job (xxviii. 12), as well as the apocryphal Books of Wisdom, Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, had set forth the Divine "wisdom," *σοφία*, with more or less of personification and even personal dignity, answering to the creative energy and resources here attributed to the *Logos*. From eternity was it brought forth, in the beginning of all God's ways. "The Lord possessed me," Wisdom says, "before his works." In the controversy of the third and fourth centuries the LXX. translation in Prov. viii. 22 of *ἐν ἡμέρᾳ* by *ἐκτισέ* led Arius and others to the idea of the *creation* of the *Logos* before all worlds. The Vulgate translation, "possessed me," is a far closer approach to the original. The whole of the passage, Prov. viii. 22—27, is in correspondence with the functions and dignity of him who is here described as "in the beginning with God." The Jewish translators and commentators had so thoroughly grasped the idea, that they were accustomed, in their Chaldean paraphrases of the Old Testament, to substitute for the name of the Most High, the phrase *Memra-Jah*, "The Word of the Lord," as though the Lord, in his activities and energies; and in his relations with the universe and man, could be better understood under the form of this periphrasis

than in that which connoted his eternal and absolute Being. The Targum of Onkelos—the oldest, most accurate, and precious of these documents—in numerous places substitutes “the Word of the Lord” for Jehovah, “the Word of Elohim” for Elohim, and “the Word of the Lord” for the angel or messenger of Jehovah. Thus in Gen. vii. 16 it is said, “The Lord protected Noah by his Word;” xxi. 20, “The Word of the Lord was with Ishmael in the wilderness.” In Gen. xxviii. 21 Jacob made a covenant that “the Word of the Lord should be his God;” Exod. xix. 17, “Moses brought forth the people to meet the Word of God.” The term *Deburah*, which is analogous in meaning to *Memra*, is also used in the Jerusalem Targum of Numb. vii. 89 in a similar sense. The substitution was adopted in the same way by Jonathan ben Uziel, in his paraphrase of Isa. lxiii. 7 and Mal. iii. 1, so that the Jewish mind was thoroughly imbued with this method of portraying the instrument and agent of the Divine revelations, as one savouring of the smallest amount of anthropomorphism, which they were willing to attribute to the Holy One of Israel. Another group of highly important biblical representations of the activity and self-revelation of God consists of the personal “Angel (or Messenger) of Jehovah,” who not infrequently appears, even in human form, conversing with the patriarchs, and making covenant with man (see Gen. xxxii. 24, etc.; Exod. xxxiii. 12, etc.; Hos. xii. 4; Isa. lxiii. 9; Mal. iii. 1 and other places). In some of these passages the Name of Jehovah himself is attributed to his Angel, and the form of Divine manifestation becomes more and more clearly personal. Nevertheless, this Angel appears to stand within, rather than without, the very bosom of the Eternal One. Jehovah does not lose his Name of unapproachable dignity and absolute existence while yet he clothes himself with angelic powers, or even human form, and enters into living and intimate relations with his own people. Kurtz (*‘Old Covenant,’* vol. i. pp. 181–201) has urged that the numerous references in Old Testament to the “Angel Jehovah,” are compatible with the idea of a created spirit, endowed with plenipotentary functions and titles, and perfectly distinct from the “Logos.” The strength of his position is that during the Incarnation and afterwards the New Testament writers still speak of the activity and might of “the Angel of the Lord.” But this position is greatly modified by the obvious fact that the Logos did not become depotentiated and limited to the life of Jesus during the thirty years of his earthly manifestation. During the whole of that period, and ever since, the Logos has not ceased to exercise the func-

tions which belong to his eternal glory. It cannot be said that Philo was ignorant of these modes of expression, though in the main he allows the idea of “Word” to pass away from the term *λόγος*, and he charged it with a meaning which he found in Platonic and stoical philosophy, and used it, not in the historic or theocratic sense, which was current in the Palestinian schools, but in the metaphysic and speculative sense which enabled him to make the Hebrew Scriptures the vehicle of his ethical system. *Word*, in the Old Testament and in the Chaldee Paraphrases, represented the nearest possible approach to a definition of the activity and revelations of God; and that activity is regarded, not as a mere attribute, but as an essential and personal aspect of the Eternal One. In the hands of the Apostle John (unlike Philo’s), the Logos was a distinct hypostasis, identifiable with God, and yet in union and relation with him. He was “in the beginning,” and therefore before all creation. He did not *become*. He was not *made*. He *was*. As speech answers to the immanent realities of which it is expression, the idea of John in this first verse suggests, though the suggestion does not come into further expression, the “thought” or “reason” which evermore was shaping itself into “word.” It would seem as though the apostle had been led to gather together into one teaching the various suggestions of the Old Testament. He realized the significance of the omnicf Word. He embodied and improved upon the sapiential philosophy in its conception of Divine Wisdom, of the Brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express Image of his substance; he felt the force and justice of the Hebrew periphrases for God, the only God, in his gracious relations with man; and he was not ignorant of the speculations of the Hellenists who found in this term the phasis of all Divine self-consciousness, and the symbol of pure being in its relation with the universe. In the beginning the Logos was. And the Word (Logos) was with God (πρὸς τὸν Θεόν). The preposition is difficult to translate; it is equivalent to “was in relation with God,” “stood over against,” not in space or time, but eternally and constitutionally. It is more, even, than the *παρὰ* σοί (ch. xvii. 5); for, in addition to the idea of proximity, there is that of “motion towards” involved in *πρὸς*. A verb of rest is here combined with a preposition of motion, exactly as in *ὦν εἰς τὸν κόλπον* of ver. 18. In Mark vi. 3; ix. 19; Matt. xiii. 36; xxvi. 55; 1 Cor. xvi. 6, 7; Gal. i. 18 the similar use of *πρὸς* shows that the idea of intercourse is suggested, and mutual acquaintance, so that the personality of the Logos is therefore

strongly forced upon us. The strength and peculiarity of the expression precludes the interpretation of some who see here simply some "intuition in the Divine mind," or that "the Word was eternally in the Divine plan." There is relation between these two, laying the foundations of all ethic in the nature and subsistence of Deity. Righteousness and love are inconceivable perfections of an Eternal Monad. But if within the bosom of God there are affirmations, hypostases in relation with each other, the moral nature of the Eternal is assured. Philo's conception of Logos as "the sum total of all Divine energies made it possible for him to urge that God, so far as he reveals himself; is called Logos, and Logos, so far as he reveals God, is called God" (Meyer). But this falls short of the Johannine thought. The Logos was with the God (τὸν Θεόν)—was in relation with the Supreme and Absolute One, was in eternal communion with him. The notion of "Logos" limited to the mere revelation of the Divine to the universe, or the Mediator or Archangel of the Divine counsels to men, is seen to be insufficient. The πρὸς τὸν Θεόν implies communion as anterior to revelation. And the (Logos) Word was God. Though Θεός precedes the verb, yet the disposition of the article shows that it is the predicate, and not the subject, of the sentence. The absence of the article is important. If Θεός had been written with the article, then the sentence would have identified the λόγος and Θεός, and reduced the distinction expressed in the previous clause to one that is purely modal or subjective. Again, he does not say Θεῖος, Divine, which, seeing the lofty dignity of the Logos, would have been a violation of the eternal unity, and have corresponded with the δεύτερος Θεός which Philo attributed to the Logos; but he says Θεός simply (not Θεοῦ, according to Crellius, for which there is no justification)—God in his nature, essence, and kind; God, *i.e.*, as distinct from man, from angel, or from the kosmos itself. Thus the Son is not confounded with the Father, but declared to be of the same οὐσία, the same φύσις. Though with God when God is regarded in all the fullness of his eternal being, he is nevertheless of the same order and kind and substance. Luther translates the passage, "Gott war das Wort," but this translation jars on the sublime symmetry of the whole passage, which is not concerned with definitions of God, but with revelations concerning the Logos.

**Ver. 2.**—The same Logos whom the writer has just affirmed to have been God himself, was, though it might seem at first reading to be incompatible with the first or third clause of the first verse, nevertheless in the beginning with God—"in the beginning,"

and therefore, as we have seen, eternally in relation with God. The previous statements are thus stringently enforced, and, notwithstanding their tendency to diverge, are once more bound into a new, unified, and emphatic utterance. Thus the αὐτός of the following sentences is charged with the sublime fullness of meaning which is involved in the three utterances of ver. 1. The first clause (1) declared that the Logos preceded the origination of all things, was the eternal ground of the world; the second (2) asserted his unique personality, so that he stands over against the eternal God, in mutual communion with the Absolute and Eternal One; the third clause (3) maintains further that the Logos was not a second God, nor merely Divine (Θεῖος) or God-like, nor is he described as proceeding out of or from God (ἐκ Θεοῦ or ἀπὸ Θεοῦ), nor is he to be called ὁ Θεός, "the God absolute," as opposed to all his manifestations; but the Logos is said to be Θεός, *i.e.* "God"—God in his nature and being. This second verse reasserts the eternal relation of such a personality "with God," and prepares the way for the statements of the following verses. The unity of the Logos and Theos might easily be supposed to reduce the distinction between them to subjective relations. The second verse emphasizes the objective validity of the relation.

**Vers. 3, 4.**—(2) *The creation of all things through the Logos, as the instrument of the eternal counsel and activity of God.*

**Ver. 3.**—All things (πάντα, not τὰ πάντα) taken one by one, rather than all things regarded in their totality—"all things," *i.e.* all beings and elements of things visible or invisible, in heaven, earth, and under the earth (see Col. i. 16, etc.), came into being through him, through the Logos, who was in the beginning with God, and was God. The Logos is the organ or instrument by which everything, one by one, was made. Two other words are used in the New Testament to denote "creation"—κρίειν, used in Rev. iv. 11 and Col. i. 16, a word indicating the mind and act of the Creator; and ποιεῖν, which, as in Mark x. 6, points generally to the thing made. The parts of the verb γίνεσθαι indicate the progress of the work, the process of some creative order, the occurrence of some event in the evolution of Divine providence. This word does not by one solitary expression dogmatically convey the creative act, but the fact of the "becoming," from, it may be, the region of pure thought to that of existence, or from non-observation into prominence, or from an inchoate to a perfect development, or from nothing to something. The context must determine the fullness of its meaning. Occasionally, as in ch. viii. 58, it is powerfully contrasted with existence:



"Before Abraham was [had come into being] I am." The context here does not allow us to affirm that St. John repudiated the prior existence of the *ὁλν*, stuff, of which *πάντα* were made. He does not affirm nor deny such a prior existency or condition, but by referring the universe in all its parts and items to the *Logos*, he absolutely ignores the Platonic notion of eternal matter. He could scarcely be ignorant of the speculation as it entered into the Philonic interpretation and formed the basis of the Gnostic speculations which were beginning to infest the early Church. By giving, however, a Divine origin and instrument to the "becoming" of *πάντα*, and strengthening his statement by the negative co-assurance, he absolutely excludes the dualism of Philo and of Gnostic tendency. In asserting that the *Logos* is he or that through whom all things were made, the writer does not lower the dignity of the *Logos* by regarding him merely as the *ὁργανον* of the Father, because the same preposition is used of the relation of the Father to the world or to his servants (Rom. xi. 36; Gal. i. 1; Heb. ii. 10). Elsewhere St. Paul powerfully affirms the same application of *διὰ* (1 Cor. viii. 6) to Christ's part in the Creation, reserving for the One God, the Father, the preposition *ἐκ*. From God and by or through God are all things, still "all things" derive their existence "through" the activity, the will, the thought, of the *Logos*. "The sphere contracts as the blessing enlarges [query, 'intensifies']: existence for everything; life for vegetable and animal world; light for men" (Plummer). The same idea is made more explicit by the negative form in which it is restated: and without him—that is, independently of his co-operation and volition (cf. ch. xv. 5)—not even <sup>1</sup> one thing came into being. The *ὁλν* could hardly be spoken of as "one thing," seeing, according to the theory, it was not a unit as opposed to a multiplicity, but the condition of all things. The *ἐγένετο* would drive harder against any recognition of the *ὁλν* than would the *ἐν*. There is not the faintest approach to any supposition on John's part of the existence of such a primeval entity or eternal reality. The *ὁ γέγονεν* gives the student of the text and of the meaning grave difficulty. From very early times the Alexandrine Fathers and numerous uncial manuscripts, and an immense group of quotations and versions, unquestionably close the sentence we have just considered with *ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἐν*, and consider the *ὁ γέγονεν* as the subject of the following clause, translating it either, *That which*

*has come into being in him was life; or, that which has come into being was (or is) life in him*—for one manuscript, *N*, has rendered the text more grammatical by reading *ἔστι* instead of *ἦν*.<sup>1</sup> This, adopting the supposed early punctuation, Tregelles and Westcott

<sup>1</sup> The authorities for this punctuation are thus given by Westcott and Tregelles: *A*, *C*\*, *D*, *L*, one manuscript of the Vulgate, though not Cod. Am. Some of the old Latin manuscripts leave it without doubt. The Curetonian Syriac and some Egyptian Versions coincide. The Fathers seem to quote both modes of punctuation. Thus Origen gives it nine times as above and six times as in T.R. Ambrose and Jerome, Hippolytus and Eusebius, recognize both punctuations. On the other hand, the great bulk of the later uncial manuscripts and cursives give the "point" after *ἐν*. *N*, *B*, cannot be appealed to for punctuation, as they have none; but Tatian, 'Ad. Gr.', Irenæus very frequently (Tregelles cites six passages), Tertullian, Eusebius, and others place the point after *οὐδὲ ἐν*. The "modern stopping," to use Canon Westcott's phrase, was adopted by the school of Antioch, who wished to make it clear that the Holy Spirit was not included among the *πάντα*. Chrysostom says that he will not put the stop at *οὐδὲ ἐν*, as the heretics do, who say, "That which hath become in him was life," wishing to speak of the Holy Spirit as a *κτίσμα*." This passage seems to show that Chrysostom attributed the punctuation in question to the heretics. He does not admit that the heretics could prove the reference to the Holy Spirit, even if the punctuation was the true one. The quotation made from Epiphanius, 'Ancoratus,' c. lxxiv. and lxxv., shows quite as much for the common punctuation. Lachmann and Tregelles led the way in this interpretation, and Dr. Moulton agrees with Dr. Westcott in adopting it. Lücke recognized the antiquity of the punctuation, but found great difficulty in the construction. He did not think that *οὐδὲ ἐν* was weakened by the *ὁ γέγονεν*, and says, justly, that the author could not have intended to say, "that that which had come into existence was the Life or Light of the world." He thought that the reassertion of the creative force of the *Logos*, as subject of the following sentence, would have been expressed by a repetition of the *ὁ αὐτοῦ*. Moreover, he urges that, though John uses the form *γενέσθαι ἐ* and *εἶναι ἐν*, he never uses *γενέσθαι ἐν* in this sense, and he decides against the punctuation which makes *ὁ γέγονεν* the subject of the next sentence. In this he has been confirmed by Godet, Luthardt, Meyer, Lange, M'Lellan, Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and R.T.

<sup>1</sup> The reading *οὐδὲ ἐν*, of T.R. and R.T. stands on the authority of *N*, *A*, *B*, *C*, though *D* and some Fathers read *οὐδὲν*.

and Hort have introduced into the text; but R.T. has coincided with T.R. Dr. Westcott has an elaborate note affirming the deep thought involved in the "ancient punctuation," to the effect that the  $\delta$  γέγονεν refers, not merely to the original creation, ἐγένετο, but to the continued existence of that which has come into being. Of this, it is said, it derives its life, has its life in the Logos, and that this idea is expressed in a profounder way than by saying ἔχει ζωὴν; that it *was* life (before it was called into being, or became) *in him*. This profound and mysterious statement is affirmed by Dr. Moulton and Dr. Westcott to find different but clear expression in Rev. iv. 11, "Thou art worthy, our Lord and our God, to receive glory, etc.; for thou didst create all things, and for thy pleasure they were [ἦσαν, the reading preferred by Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Westcott and Hort, instead of ἐστὶ, 'they are'] and were created." Dr. Westcott thinks that "life" here represents "the Divine element in creation, that in virtue of which things 'are' each according to the fulness of its being." What has been created represents the eternal thought, the life that it had in the Logos before the world was. Unless one were compelled to take this thought by the exigencies of the textual criticism, we should hesitate to affirm that this can be the author's intention. To us the common punctuation is far more satisfactory in meaning: *Apart from him there came into existence not one thing which has come into existence.* This, in its grand comprehensiveness and individualizing of every molecule and every force, brings the mind of the reader down from eternity to time, from the creation to the preservation and providence of the world, and it prepares the way for the great assertion of the following verse.

Ver. 4.—(a) *The Life*, and therefore inclusive of the fact that the Logos always has been and now is (b) *the Light of men*. In him was <sup>1</sup> life. "Life" in all its fulness of meaning—that grand addition to things which confers upon them all their significance for men. There is one impassable chasm which neither history, nor science, nor philosophy can span, viz. that between nothing and something. The evangelist has found the only possible method of facing it—by the conception of One who from eternity has within himself the potency of the transition. There is another impassable chasm in thought—that between non-living

atoms and living energies and individualities. The assertion now is that life, *ζωή*, with all its manifestations and in all its regions; that the life of plant, tree, and animal, the life of man, of society, and of worlds as such; that the life of the body, soul, and spirit, the life transitory and the life eternal (*ζωὴ αἰώνιος*), *was in the Logos*, "who was God and in the beginning with God." Elsewhere in the Gospel Jesus said that "as the Father had life in himself, so he gave to the Son to have life in himself" (ch. v. 26); i.e. he communicated to the Son his own Divine self-dependence. The Gospel, however, lays the greatest emphasis on the life-giving powers of the Christ as incarnate Logos. The healing of the impotent man (ch. v.), the raising of the dead Lazarus (ch. xi.), are chosen proofs of his life-giving energy. His claim (ch. x.) to retake the life that he would voluntarily relinquish, and the august majesty with which, in his resurrection-life (ch. xx., xxi.), he proclaimed his absolute and final victory over death, constitute the reasons which induced the evangelist to lay down at the very outset that in the Logos was *life*. Life, in all its energies, past, present, and future, is an outcome, an effluence, of the Eternal Word. And the life was (and is) the light of men. Observe, it is not said here that physical life is a consequence or issue of the solar beam, or of the Word which in the beginning called light out of darkness. All the religious systems of the East and all modern sciences agree to extol and all but worship the light-force, with all that seems so inseparably associated with it. The evangelist was reaching after something far more momentous even than that dogma of ancient faith and modern science. He is not speaking of "the light of the sun," but of "the light of men." Whatever this illumination may include, John does not refer it directly to the Logos, but to the life which is "in him." "The light of men" has been differently conceived by expositors. Calvin supposed that the "understanding" was intended—"that the life of men was not of an ordinary description, but was united to the light of understanding," and is that by which man is differentiated from animals. Hengstenberg regards it, in consequence of numerous associations of "light" with "salvation" in Holy Scripture, as equivalent to salvation; Luthardt with "holiness;" and many with the "eternal life," which would introduce great tautology. The context is our best guide. This light is said to be the veritable light which lighteth every man, and to be shining into darkness. Consequently, to make it the complex of all the gracious processes which beautify the renewed soul is to hurry on faster than the apostle, and to anticipate the evolution of his thought. "The light of men" seems to

<sup>1</sup> The reading ἐστὶν is a very ancient interpretative gloss, introduced by Tischendorf (8th edit.) into the text, on the authority of S, D, a codex known to Origen, a, b, c, but not adopted by Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, or R.T.

be the faculty or condition, the inward and outward means, by which men know God. "The light of men" is the conscience and reason, the eye of the soul by which the human race comes into contact with truth and right and beauty. The perfections of God answering to these functions of the soul are not, and were never, manifested in mere matter or force. Until we survey the operations of God in life we have no hint of either. The lower forms of life in plant or animal may reveal the wisdom and beneficence and beauty of the Logos, and so far some light shines upon man; but even these have never been adequately appreciated until the life of man himself comes into view, then the Divine perfections of righteousness and moral loveliness break upon the eye of the soul. In the life of conscience and reason a higher and more revealing light is made to shine upon man, upon his origin, upon his Divine image, upon his destiny. In the spiritual life which has been superinduced upon the life of the conscience and of the flesh, there is the highest light, the brightest and warmest and most potent rays of the whole spectrum of Divine illumination. "The life" which was in the Logos "was," has always been, is now, will ever be, "the light of men." The plural, "of men" (*τῶν ἀνθρώπων*), justifies this larger and sweeping generalization. The two "imperfects" (*ἦν*) placing the process in the past do not compel us to limit the operation to the past or ideal sphere. They assert what was "in the beginning," and which can never cease to be; but they partly imply further consequences, which the actual condition of man has introduced.

Ver. 5. — (3) *The antagonism between light and darkness.* The highest manifestation and proof of the following statement will be found in that great entrance of the Eternal Logos into human life which will shed the most complete ray of Divine light upon men; but before that great event, during its occurrence, and ever since, *i.e.* throughout all times and nations, the light shineth in the darkness. Many expositors, like Godet, after long wavering and pondering, resolve this expression into a distinct epitome of the effect of the Incarnation, the highest manifestation of the light in the theanthropic life, and hesitate to see any reference to the shining of the light upon the darkness of humanity or of the heathen world. They do this on the ground that there is no confirmation or illustration of this idea in John's Gospel. However, let the following parallels and expositions of this thought be considered. Our Lord discriminates between those who "hate the light" and "those who do the truth and come to the light" (ch. iii. 21). He delights

in those whom the Father has given to him, and who come to him (ch. vi. 37). He speaks of "other sheep which are not of this fold, who hear his voice" (ch. x. 16). He tells Pilate that "every one who is of the truth heareth my voice" (ch. xviii. 37). In solitary address to the Father (ch. xvii. 6), he says, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." In all these passages abundant hint is given of a direct treatment of souls antecedent to, or rather irrespective of, the special grace of Christ's earthly manifestation. This passage, so far, in the wide embrace of its meaning, asserts that *the light* here taken as the effluence of the life itself, perpetually, for ever, shineth (*φαίει*, not *φωτίζει*)—pours forth its radiance by its own essential necessity into the "darkness." "Darkness" and "light" are metaphors for moral conditions. Though there is a "light of men" which is the result of the meeting of man's capacity with Divine revelation, yet, for the most part, there is a terrible antagonism, a fearful negative, a veritable opposition to the light, a blinding of the eye of the soul to the clearest beam of heavenly wisdom, righteousness, and truth. Light has a battle to fight, both with the circumstances and the faculties of men. The ancient light which broke over the childhood of humanity, the brighter beams which fell on consciences irradiated and educated by a thousand ministries, the light which was focused in the incarnate Logos and diffused in all the "entrance of the Divine Word" into the heart of men, have all and always this solemn contingency to encounter—"The light shineth in the darkness." And the darkness apprehended it not. This word translated "apprehended" (*κατέλαβε*) has, in New Testament Greek, undoubtedly the sense of "laying hold with evil intent," "overtaking" (ch. xii. 35; 1 Thess. v. 4; Mark ix. 18), "suppressing" (Lange), "overcoming" (Westcott and Moulton); and a fine sense would arise from this passage if it means that, while the light shone into the darkness, it did not scatter it, but, on the other hand, neither did the darkness suppress or absorb and neutralize the light. Certainly the darkness was disastrous, tragical, prolonged, but *not* triumphant, even in the gloomiest moments of the pre-Incarnation period, even in the darkest hour and place of savage persecution, even in the time of outrage, superstitious impenetrability, or moral collapse. There are, however, two classes of difficulty in this interpretation. (1) *Καταλαμβάνω* is in LXX. used for *קָחַ*, *לָקַח*, and *כָּנַס*, and in many places in the New Testament has its ordinary classical sense, "lay hold of," "apprehend," "comprehend," "understand," "come to know,"

*intelligo*, and *cognosco* (Eph. iii. 18), though in this latter sense it is mostly used in the middle voice. (2) When the apostle, in greater detail and more immediate reference to the individual illustrations he gives of the relation of the darkness to the light, says in vers. 10, 11, 'Ο κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω, and Οἱ Ἰσραῖοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον; though slightly different words are used, yet the return upon the thought in these parallel sentences is too obvious to be overlooked. The non-susceptibility of the darkness, the positive resistance it makes to the action of light, finds its strongest illustration in the more defined regions and narrower sphere of the coming of the Logos to the world, and in his special mission to his own people. In this view Alford, Bengel, Schaff, Godet, Luthardt, Tholuck, Meyer, Ewald, coincide, though the suggestion of Origen and Chrysostom, and in later years of Schulthess, Westcott, etc., has been powerfully urged. The broad, general fact is stated, not excluding the exceptions on which the evangelist himself afterwards enlarges. If the darkness had "apprehended" the light, it would no more be darkness. The melancholy fact is that the corruption in the world has been, for the most part, impervious to the light alike of nature, of life, of conscience, and even of revelation. Hence, says Bengel, "the occasion for the Incarnation." This is exaggeration, because the whole record of the incarnate Word is a continuous story of the resistance of the darkness to the light.

Vers. 6—13.—(4) *The general manifestation of the revealing Logos.*

Vers. 6—8.—(a) *The prophetic dispensation.*

Ver. 6.—There was a man, sent from (παρὰ Θεοῦ) God, whose name was John. Observe the contrast between the ἐγένετο of John's appearance and the ἦν of the Logos, between the "man" John sent from God and the (ΛΟΓΟΣ ΣΑΡΞ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ) "Word became flesh" of ver. 14. At this point the evangelist touches on the temporal mission and effulgence of the true Light in the Incarnation; yet this paragraph deals with far more general characteristics and wider ranges of thought than the earthly ministry of Christ on which he is about to enlarge. First of all, he deals with the testimony of John in its widest sense; afterwards he enlarges upon it in its striking detail. Consequently, we think that "the man," "John," is, when first introduced, referred to in his representative character rather than his historical position. The teaching of the prophets and synoptists shows that "John" was rather the exponent of the old covenant than the harbinger of the new. He was the embodiment of the idea of prophet, priest, and ascetic of the patriarchal, Mosaic, and latest

Hebraic revelation. He was "more than a prophet." No one greater than he had ever been born of woman, and his functions in these several particulars are strongly impressed upon that disciple who here loses his own individuality in the strength of his Master's teaching. Through this very "man sent from God" the apostle had been prepared to see and personally receive the Logos incarnate. His personality gathered up for our author all that there was in the past of definite revelation, while Jesus filled up all the present and the future. First of all, he treats the mission of the Baptist as representative of all that wonderful past.

Ver. 7.—This man came (historic, ἦλθε) for witness, that he might bear witness concerning the Light. The entire prophetic dispensation is thus characterized. That which the Baptist did, Malachi, Isaiah, Elijah, Hosea, Moses, had done in their day. He came, and by penetrating insight and burning word, by flashes of moral revelation and intense earnestness, "bare witness concerning the Light" which was ever shining into the darkness. His aim and theirs was to prevent the forces of darkness from suppressing or absorbing the light. He came to sting the apathy and disturb the self-complacency of the darkness. He came to interpret the fact of the Light which was shining but not apprehended; and so did all the prophetic ministry of which he was the latest and most illustrious exponent. He came to assert the meaning for man of all God's perfections; to call conscience from its death-sleep; to draw distinctions of tremendous significance between moral and ceremonial obedience; to exalt obedience above sacrifice, and works meet for repentance above Abrahamic privilege; to warn by lurid threatenings of a fiery wrath and a terrible curse which would fall on the disobedient, though consecrated, people. In this he was but the last of a goodly fellowship of prophets who bore witness to the Light of life which had its being in the Eternal Logos of God. He came, as they all had come, with a view of producing results far greater than, as a matter of fact, they have actually achieved. He came to bear such testimony that all through him, i.e. by the force of his appeal or by the fierce glow thus cast upon the perils and follies of the hour, might believe—might realize the full significance of the Light which they had hitherto refused to accept. The greatness of this expectation corresponds with the hope which the ministry of Jesus failed also to realize (Matt. xi. 9—14). The splendid ministry of this "burning and shining lamp" might, it would seem, have brought all Israel to

acknowledge Christ as the Light of the world; but "the darkness apprehended it not." The entire prophetic dispensation, the testimony which the priestly services and sacrifices bore to the evil of sin and to the awfulness of righteousness, as well as the condemnation of the follies and pleasures of the world, involved in John the Baptist's ascetic profession, might have roused all Israel to believe in the Light. He gathered together all the forces of the Mosaic, prophetic, Levitical, Essenic ministries to bear on the people. Everything that Law could do was done to reveal the Light; but "all" did not believe, for "the darkness apprehended it not."

Ver. 8.—A solemn warning is given, which for ever discriminates the ministry of man from the eternal ministry of the Logos. He (John, and with him all the prophetic, Levitical, ascetic teachers in all ages) was not the Light, but [*he was or came*] that he might bear witness of the Light. The *ἦν* depends upon some unexpressed verbal thought; for even in the passages where it stands alone (ch. ix. 3; xiii. 18; xiv. 31; xv. 25) the reference is not obscure to some pre-existing or involved verb. The distinction here drawn between John and the Light is thought by some expositors to point to the condition of the Ephesian Church, in the neighbourhood of which there still lingered some who placed John in even a higher position than that accorded to Jesus (Acts xix. 3, 4); but the teaching of the evangelist is far more comprehensive than this. The Light of men has higher source and wider range of operation than that of any prophetic man. All that he, that any seer whatsoever can do, is to bear witness to it. The prophets, from Moses to John, derived all their power, their sanction, and the corroboration of their message, from the Logos-light shining through conscience and blazing through providential events and burning up the stubble of human action with unquenchable fire. The prophets are not the light of God; they are sent to bear witness to it.

Ver. 9.—(b) *The illumination of the archetypal Light before incarnation.* There are at least three grammatical translations of this verse. Either (1), with Meyer, we may give to *ἦν* the complete sense of existence, presence, and include in it the full predicate of the sentence; thus: "Existing, present (when John commenced his ministry), was the veritable Light which enlighteneth every man coming into the world." But the clause, "coming into the world," would here not only be superfluous, but moreover, while used elsewhere and often of Christ's incarnation, is never used of ordinary birth in the Scriptures, though it is a rabbinical

expression. (2) Lange, Moulton, Westcott, Godet, applying the *ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον* to the light rather than to man, translate it, "That was the true Light which lighteth every man, by coming into the world, or that cometh into the world." The difficulty of this is that it makes the coming into the world, in some new sense, the occasion of the illumination of every man, although the evangelist has already spoken (ver. 4) of the Life which is the Light of men. A third method is to make the *ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον* the true predicate of the sentence, and translate thus: The veritable Light which illumines every man was coming (ever coming) into the world;<sup>1</sup> and there is a sense and manner of his coming which transcends all others, about which he is to speak at length. This might receive another meaning if *ἦν ἐρχόμενον* were equivalent to *ἦλθε*; then a positive reference would here be made to the historic fact of the Incarnation. But it seems to me the evangelist is drawing a contrast between the continuous coming into the world of the veritable Light and the specific Incarnation of ver. 14. Consequently, the author here travels over and connotes a wider theme, namely, the operation of that archetypal Light, that veritable Light which differs from all mere reflections of it, or imitations of it, or luminous testimonies to it. The difference between *ἀληθής* and *ἀληθινός* is important. *Ἀληθής* is used in ch. iii. 38 and v. 31, and very often to denote the true in opposition to the false, the veracious as distinct from the deceptive. *Ἀληθινός* is used in the Gospel (ch. iv. 23, 37; vi. 32; vii. 28; xv. 1; xvii. 3), First Epistle (v. 20), and Apocalypse (iii. 7), and hardly anywhere else (see Introduction), for the real as opposed to the phenomenal, the archetypal as opposed to the various embodiments of it, the veritable as distinct from that which does not answer to its own ideal. Now, about this veritable light, in addition to all that has been said already, two things are declared. (1) It illumines every man, giveth light to every individual man, in all time. Though the darkness apprehendeth it not, yet man is illumined by it. Various interpretations have been given of the method or conditions of this illumination. (a) The light of the reason and conscience—the higher reason, which is the real eye for heavenly light, and the sphere for the operation of grace. This would make the highest intellectual faculty of man a direct effulgence of the archetypal Light, and confirm the poet Wordsworth's definition of conscience as "God's most intimate pre-

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the passages which Hippolytus tells us that Basilides quoted from John ('*Refut. Hær.*,' vii. 22).

sence in the world." (b) The inner light of the mystical writers, and the "common grace" of the Remonstrant theology. Or (c) the Divine instruction bestowed on every man from the universal manifestation of the Logos-life. No man is left without some direct communication of light from the Father of lights. That light may be quenched, the eye of the soul may be blinded, the folly of the world may obscure it as a cloud disperses the direct rays of the sun; but a fundamental fact remains—the veritable Light illumines every man. Then (2) it is further declared that this Light was ever coming into the world. Bengel and Hengstenberg, as Lange and Baumgarten-Crusius, regard it as in the purely historic sense, declaratory of the great fact of the Incarnation. But Ewald, Keim, Westcott, and others decide that it refers to his *continual coming* into the world. Up to the time of the Incarnation, the great theme of the prophets is (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) the Coming One. Nor can we conceal the numberless assurances of the old covenant that the Lord of men was always "coming," and did come, to them. At one time he came in judgment, and at another time in mercy; now by world-wide convulsions, then by the fall of empires; again by the sense of need, of guilt and peril, by the bow of promise which often broke in beauty on the retreating storm-cloud, by the mighty working of conscience, by the sense given to men of their Divine relationships and their dearness to God,—by all these experiences *he has ever been coming, and he cometh still*. Ever since the coming in the flesh and the subsequent cessation of that manifestation, he has ever been coming in the grace of the Holy Spirit, in all the mission of the Comforter, in the fall of the theocratic system and city, in the great persecutions and deliverances, the chastisements and reformations, the judgments and revivals of his Church. The eternal, veritable Light which does, by its universal shining, illumine every man, is still coming. The cry, "He is coming," was the language of the noblest of heathen philosophies; "He is coming," is the burden of the Old Testament; "He is coming again," is the great under-song of the Church to the end of time: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Vers. 10, 11.—(c) *The twofold effect of the pre-Incarnation activity in the elected nation and individuals*. The highest expression of this truth was seen in the unique "coming" of which the evangelist had been the spectator and witness; but the words cannot be limited to it—they stretch back to the beginning of the creation of the world and on to the final consummation. They explain or divide the solemn theme

of the previous announcement into two related proofs of the fact that the Light which illumines every man shineth in darkness, and that the darkness apprehendeth it not.

Ver. 10.—Of him who was evermore coming into the world, it is said, In the world he was, and the world was made (came into being) through him, and the world recognized him not. The *κόσμος* is a term specially used by St. John to denote the ordered whole of the universe, viewed apart from God (see Introduction). Sometimes this is emphasized by the pronoun, "This world," when it is contrasted with the higher and heavenly "order" to which the Lord's personality belonged, both before and after this manifestation in the flesh. From being thus the scene of ordered existence apart from God, it rapidly moves into the organized resistance to the will of God, and therefore it often denotes humanity taken as a whole apart from God and grace. It may be the object of the Divine love and compassion (ch. iii. 16), while the redemption and deliverance of the world from sin is the great end of the ministry and work of Jesus (ver. 29); but throughout this gospel "the world" is the synonym of the adverse power and order of humanity, until it is illumined, regenerated, by the Spirit of God. The world here signifies humanity and its dwelling-place, considered apart from the changes wrought in any part of it by grace. The three assertions concerning the world drop the imagery of light and life, and by their emphatic concatenation, without the assistance of a Greek particle, tell the tragic story of human departure from God. Thus only can the mystery of the previous verses be explained. At the very forefront of the argument of the Gospel is put a statement which concedes the strange perplexity of the rejection of the incarnate Logos. Not only does the entire narrative illustrate the awful fact, strange and inconceivable as such an idea appears when baldly stated, but the author generalizes the antipathy between the Logos and the world into a more comprehensive, damning, and yet undeniable, proposition. From the beginning, though the world came into being through the Logos, though he was in the world, in every atom of matter, in every vibration of force, in every energy of life, yet the world, notwithstanding all its power of recognizing the fact, yet the world, as concentrated in an antagonistic humanity, *did not come to know him fully* (ἐγνώ). This is the lesson we learn from all the melancholy and tragic perversions of his glorious perfections which every heathenism and every cultus, and even every philosophy, has perpetrated. St. Paul says precisely the same thing: "The world by wisdom knew not God" (see also Rom. i.

19—22, which might be taken as an inspired commentary on the whole passage). And the awful statement is still, with reference to the majority of men, true, that "the world knoweth not God, neither the Father, nor the Word, nor the Holy Ghost."

Ver. 11.—It is not without interest that the ideas contained in these verses did not need a second century to evolve them; they were current in Paul's letters, a hundred years before the date assigned by some to this Gospel. Here the question arises—Has no more direct approach been made to our race than that which is common to every man? Undoubtedly the whole theocratic dispensation would be ignored if this were not the case—and consequently the evangelist continues the recital of the peculiarities and specialities of the approach of the Logos to the human understanding. He came unto his own possession (*eis τὰ ἴδια*). Here all expositors agree to see the special manifestation of the Logos to the house of Israel, which is called in numerous passages of the Old Testament, God's own possession (Exod. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6; Ps. cxxxv. 4; Isa. xxxi. 9). And his own (people) received him not (*παρέλαβον*; cf. *κατέλαβεν* of ver. 4, and *ἔγνω* of ver. 10). Here, again, the most astonishing, direct and prominent illustration of such a statement is seen in the historic ministry of the Lord Jesus, in the terrible record of his rejection by his own people, by his own disciples, by the theocratic chiefs, by the assembled Sanhedrin, by the very populace to whom Pilate appealed to save him from murderous fury. But the significance of the prologue is to my mind missed, if the earlier agelong rejection of the ministry, and light of the Logos, nay, the perpetual and awful treatment which he continually receives from "his own possession," be not perceived. There was a Divine and special sense in which the perpetual coming of the Logos to the world was emphasized by his gracious self-manifestations to the people of Israel. The great Name of Jehovah, the Angel of the presence, the manifestations to Abraham, to Moses, to David, to Elijah, to Isaiah, and Ezekiel; the Shechinah-glories, the whole ministry of grace to the house of Israel, was a perpetual coming to his own peculiar possession; but yet the sum total of their history is a continuous repudiation and lapse. They rejected the Lord, they fell in the wilderness, they were turned unto other gods, they went a-whoring after their own inventions. They knew not that God had healed them. The great things of his Law were accounted strange things to them (compare Stephen's apology for an elaborate exposition of this thought). The same kind of treatment has continually been given by

the world, and even by those who have boasted of standing in the special lines of his grace. This suggestion cannot be fully expanded here. Chrysostom *in loco* calls much attention to the argument of the Epistle to Romans (ii. 12; ix. 30, 32; x. 3, 12).

Vers. 12, 13.—But before the apostle advances to the central statement of the entire proem, he stops to show that, though the whole world, though man as an organized mass, though Israel as a favoured and selected theocracy, have refused to know and confess his supreme claims, yet there has always been an election of grace. All have not perished in their unbelief. Some have received him. The twelfth and thirteenth verses do, indeed, in their full meaning, refer unmistakably to the entire ministry of the living Christ to the end of time; but surely every word of it applies *primarily* (though not exclusively) to the whole previous pleadings of the Light and Life—to the ministry of the pre-existing and eternal Logos, and to the privileges and possibilities consequent thereupon. As many as received him.<sup>1</sup> This phrase is subsequently explained as being identical with "believed in his Name." The simple verb *ἔλαβον* is less definite than are its compounds with *κατά* and *παρά*, used in the previous verses (5, 11). The acceptance is a positive idea, is broader, more manifold, less restricted as to manner of operation, than the negative rejection which took sharp and decisive form. The construction is irregular. We have a *nominativus pendens* followed by a clause in the dative; as much as if he had written, "There are, notwithstanding all the rejections, those who received him." To these, the evangelist says, however many or few they may be, who believe in his Name, he—the subject of the previous sentence—gave the authority and capability of becoming children of God. Believing in his Name is discriminated from believing him. The construction occurs thirty-five times in the Gospel, and three times in the First Epistle—and the Name here especially present to the writer is the Logos, the full revelation of the essence, character, and activity, of God. John, writing in the close of his life, surveys a glorious company of individuals who, by realizing as true the sum of all the perfections of the manifested Word, by believing in his Name, have also received as a gift the sense of such union to the Son of God that they become alive to the fact that they too are the offspring of God. This realization of the Divine fatherhood, which had been so obscure before, is itself the

<sup>1</sup> Tregelles introduced *ἀν*, after *ἔλαβον*, but it was before he had seen a collation of B or N.

origination within them of filial feeling. Thus a new life is begotten and supervenes upon the old life. This new life is a new humanity within the bosom or womb of the old, and so it corresponds with the Pauline doctrine of new creation and of resurrection. *Ἐξουσία* is more than opportunity, and less than (*δύναμις*) power; it is rightful claim (which is itself the gift of God) to become what they were not before, seeing that a Divine generation has begotten them again. They are born from above. The Spirit of the Son has passed into them, and they cry, "Abba, Father." This Divine begetting is still further explained and differentiated from ordinary human life. The writer distinctly repudiates the idea that the condition he speaks of is a consequence of simple birth into this world. This is done in a very emphatic manner (*of* here in the masculine, is the well-known *constructio ad sensum*, and refers to *τέκνα Θεοῦ*). Who were begotten from God, not from (*or, of*) blood. (The plural word *αἱμάτων* has been variously rendered by expositors: Augustine regarding it as a reference to the blending of the blood of both sexes in ordinary generation; Meyer, as not different from the singular in meaning, giving numerous passages in the classics where this or an equivalent usage of the plural for the singular occurs. The suggestion of Moulton is more satisfactory—that it points to pride of race, common enough in Israel, but not peculiar to Jews.) John repudiates for this "generation" any connection with mere hereditary privilege. No twice-born Brahmin, no dignified race, no descendant of Abraham, can claim it as such, and the writer further discriminates it, as though he would leave no loophole for escape: Nor yet from the will of the flesh, nor even from the will of the man (*ἄνθρωπος* not *ἀνθρώπου*). Some, very erroneously, have supposed that "the flesh" here refers to "woman" in contradistinction to "man," and numerous efforts have been made to point out the threefold distinction. The simplest and most obvious interpretation is that "the will of the flesh" here means the human process of generation on its lower side, and "the will of the man" the higher purposes of the nobler side of human nature, which lead to the same end. Special dignity is conferred by being the son of a special father; but however honoured such might be, as in the case of an Abraham, a David, a Zacharias, such paternity has nothing to do with the sonship of which the evangelist is thinking. Doubtless this triumphant new beginning of humanity can only be found in the full revelation of the name of the incarnate Logos; but surely the primary application of the passage is to the fact that, notwithstanding the stiff-necked rejection of the

Logos by the peculiar possession and people of his love, there were, from Abraham to Malachi and to John the Baptist, those who did recognize the Light and live in the love of God. The author of Ps. xvi., xvii., xxiii., xxv., ciii., cxix., and a multitude beyond calculation, discerned and received him, walked in the light of the Lord, were kept in perfect peace, found in the Lord their most exceeding joy. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitied them." He nourished and brought up children, and to the extent to which they appreciated his holy Name they therein received as a gift the capability and claim to call him their Father. This was not a question of human fatherhood or hereditary privilege at all, but of gracious exchanges of affection between these children of his love and the Eternal, who had fashioned them in his image and regenerated them by his Holy Spirit. To restrict any element of this passage to conscious faith in the Christ is to repudiate the activity of the Logos and Spirit before the Incarnation, and almost compels a Sabellian interpretation of the Godhead. Even now the grandeur of the biblical doctrine of the Trinity—a doctrine which treats these relations as eternal and universal—compels us to believe that whenever among the sons of men there is a soul which receives the Logos in this light, *i.e.* apart from the special revelation of the Logos in the flesh, to such a one he gives the capacity and claim of sonship. John certainly could not mean to imply that there had never been a regenerated soul until he and his fellow-disciples accepted their Lord. Up to this point in his argument he has been disclosing the universal and the special operations of the Logos who in the beginning was with God and was God, the Source of all life, the Giver of all light, the veritable Light which shines upon every man, which does more even than that—which made a long-continued series of approaches to his own specially instructed and prepared people. Prophecy all through the ages has had a wondrous function to bear witness to the reality of this Light, that all might believe in it, that all might become sons by faith; but, alas! darkness, prejudice, depravity, corruption—"darkness" did not apprehend the nature, name, or mystery of love. And so he proceeds to describe the greatest, the most surprising, supreme energy of the Eternal Logos—that which illustrates, confirms, brings into the most forcible relief, the nature of his personality, and the extent of the obligation under which he has placed the human race; and proves in the most irresistible way, not only the character and nature of God, but the actual condition of humanity. The great extent of the litera-



ture and the imposing controversies which have accumulated over the entirely unique sentence that here follows render any treatment of it difficult. A volume rather than a page or two is required to exhibit the significance of a verse which is probably the most important collocation of words ever made.

Ver. 14.—(5) *The incarnation of the Logos.* And the Logos became flesh. The *καί* has been variously expanded, some giving it the force of "then" or "therefore," as though John was now resuming the entire argument from the beginning; others the sense of "for," as though the apostle needed to introduce a reason or justification for what had been said in vers. 12, 13. It is enough to regard the *καί* as a simple copula, after the same manner in which it is used in vers. 1, 4, 5, 10, introducing by it a new and suggestive truth or fact which must be added to what has gone before, qualifying, illuminating, illustrating, consummating all previous representations of the activity and functions of the Eternal Logos. Meyer, rejecting all the explicative modifications of the copula, nearly approaches the emphasis which Godet would lay upon it, by saying, "John cannot refrain from expressing the how of that appearing which had such blessed results (vers. 12, 13), and which he had himself experienced." The circumstance that in this verse the author goes back to the verbal use of the great term *ὁ Λόγος* suggests rather the fact that the fourteenth verse follows directly upon the stupendous definitions of ver. 1, and indicates a powerful antithesis to the several clauses of that opening sentence. The Logos which *was* in the beginning has now *become*; the Logos which was *God* became *flesh*; the Logos that was *with God* has *set up his tabernacle among us*. If so, the *καί* does suggest a parenthetical treatment of vers. 2—13, every clause of which has been necessary to prepare the reader for the vast announcement which is here made. Various things, relations, and powers have been asserted with reference to the Logos. All things *became* through him; not a single exception is allowed. Not one thing can be, or can have come into existence, independently of him; yet he is not said in any sense to have "become all things." More than that, the twofold form of the expression stringently repudiates the pantheistic hypothesis. All life is said to be "in him," to have its being in his activity; yet he is not said to have *become life*, as if the life-principle were henceforth the mode of his existence, or a state or condition into which he passed, and so the emanation theories of early Gnostics and of modern pantheistic evolutionists are virtually set aside. "The

veritable Light which lighteth every man" is the illumination which the *Life* pours on the understanding and conscience of men, to which all prophecy bears witness; but he is not said to have *become* that light. Thus the incarnation of the Logos in every man is most certainly foreign to the thought of the apostle. He is said to have been "in the world" which he made, yet in such manifestation and concealment that the world as such did not apprehend the wondrous presence; and he is said also to have been continually coming to his own people "in sundry times" and "divers manners," in prophetic visions and angelic and even theanthropic form or fashion. Elsewhere in this Gospel we hear that Abraham "saw his day," and Isaiah "beheld his glory;" but it is not said that he *became*, i.e. entered into permanent and unalterable relations with these theophanic glories. Consequently, the deep self-conscious realization of the glory of his Name, enjoyed by greatest saints and sages of the past, was but a faint adumbration of what John declared he and others had had distinct historical opportunity of seeing, hearing, handling, of that Word of life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us (1 John i. 1, 2). The statement of this verse, however, is entirely, absolutely unique. The thought is utterly new. Strauss tells us that the apostolic conception of Jesus can have no historic validity, because it represents a state of things which occurs nowhere else in history. *This is exactly what Christians contend for.* He is in the deepest sense absolutely unique in the history of mankind. Moses, Isaiah, John the Baptist, John the Apostle, Socrates, Buddha, Zoroaster, may have borne witness to the Light; but of not one of them can it be said, and at least it was not said or even imagined by St. John, the Logos became flesh in his humanity. Yet this is what he did think and say was the only explanation of the glory of Jesus; this unspeakable relation to the Eternal Logos was sustained by his well-known Friend and Master. *And the Word was made flesh.* *Flesh* (*σάρξ*, answering in the LXX. to *ἄνθρωπος*) is the term used to denote the whole of humanity, with prominent reference to that part of it which is the region of sensibility and visibility. The word is more comprehensive than (*σῶμα*) "body," which is often used as the antithesis of *νοῦς*, *ψυχή*, and *πνεῦμα*; for it is unquestionable that the conventional use of *σάρξ*, and *σάρξ καὶ αἷμα*, includes oftentimes both soul and spirit—includes the whole of human constitution, yet that constitution considered apart from God and grace, answering in this way to *κόσμος*. The flesh is not necessarily connotative of sin, though the com-

ditions, the possibilities, the temptableness of created finite nature are involved in it.<sup>1</sup> It is nearly equivalent to saying *ἄνθρωπος*, generic manhood, but it is more explicit than such a dictum would have been. It is not said that the Word became a man, although "*became man*" is the solemn and suggestive form in which the great truth is further expressed in the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed.<sup>2</sup> "*The Logos became flesh.*" Thus it answers to numerous expressions in the Pauline Epistles, which must have been based in the middle of the first century on the direct and well-preserved teachings of our Lord himself (Rom. i. 3, *Γενόμενος κατὰ σάρκα*; viii. 3, *Ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἡμαρτίας*; 1 Tim. iii. 16, *Ὁς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί*; cf. Phil. ii. 7; Heb. ii. 14; and above all 1 John iv. 2, where Jesus Christ, the centre of whose personality is the Logos, and is there used in the most transcendent sense, is there spoken of (*ἐν σαρκί ἐληλυθότα*) as having come in the flesh). Very early in the Christological discussions, even so far back as Praxeas whom Tertullian sought to refute, and by Apollinaris the younger, in the fourth century, it was said that this passage asserted that, though the Logos took or became flesh, he did not become or take upon himself the human *νοῦς* or *πνεῦμα*, the reasonable soul or spirit of man, but that the Logos took the place in Jesus of the mind or spirit. Apollinaris explained, in vindication of his view, that thus Christ was neither God nor man, but a blending of the two natures into a new and third nature, neither one nor the other. This view was stoutly resisted by Athanasius and Basil. It reappeared in the fifth century, in the form of Eutychianism, to do duty against the two-fold Christ of Nestorianism. The opponents of Praxeas, Apollinaris, and Eutyches were all fain to show that the Gospel of John calls marked attention to the human soul of Jesus (ch. xii. 27) and of his human spirit (ch. xi. 33; xiii. 21; xix. 30), to say nothing of Heb. v. 8, where "he learned obedience," etc. The flesh of Christ is constitutive and

inclusive of his entire humanity. Flesh itself is not human flesh without the human *ψυχή*, nor can there be a human soul without human spirit. The two terms are used interchangeably, and their functions are not to be regarded as different factors of humanity so much as different departments of human activity. There is a complete humanity, therefore, included in this term, not a humanity destitute of one of its most characteristic features. But the question arises—What is meant by *ἐγένετο*, "became," "was made"? A considerable number of modern Lutheran divines have laid such emphasis on the *κένωσις*, the "emptying" of his glory on the part of him who was "in the form of God," that nothing short of an absolute depotentialization of the Logos is supposed to have occurred when "he was made flesh" or "man." Gess and Godet have pressed the theory that the *ἐγένετο* represents a complete transubstantiation and metamorphosis. Thus Logos had been God from eternity, but now, in the greatness of his humiliation, he was no longer Logos at all, nor God, but flesh; so that during the time of the Incarnation the Logos was absolutely concealed, potential only, and that even a consciousness of his eternity and the Divine powers were all in absolute abeyance. This hypothesis, on both its Divine and human side, appears to us hopelessly unthinkable. If the Logos was no longer Logos, and the Godhead thus ineffably truncated, the very argument of the apostle that in him was life and light, etc., must break down. The sources of life and light must have been themselves in eclipse, and God himself was no longer God. Moreover, the hypothetical obliteration of the Logos would deprive the whole argument of the apostle for the Divineness and Godhead of the Lord of its basis in fact. There are many different forms in which this meaning of the *ἐγένετο* is urged, but they all break to pieces upon the revelation of the self-consciousness of Jesus Christ, the Divine memories and awful centre of his personality, in which the nature of the Godhead and the perfect nature of manhood are blended in one personality. Moreover, the *ἐγένετο* does not imply annihilation of the *Λόγος*, or transubstantiation of *Λόγος* into *σὰρξ*. When the water was made (*γεννημένον*) wine, the water was not obliterated, but it took up by the creative power of Christ other substances into itself, constituting it *wine*. So when the *Λόγος* became "flesh," he took up humanity with all its powers and conditions into himself, constituting himself "the Christ." The question arises—Wherein was the humiliation and the *kenosis*, if the Logos throughout the incarnate life of Christ, as a Person, possessed and exercised all his Divine energies? The answer is, that, in

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Jamieson, 'Profound Problems in Theology, Philosophy' (1884), has laboured hard, without success, to identify "flesh" with "sin," and to regard this passage as equivalent to "He made him to be *sin* for us," etc. (cf. the Baird Lecture of Dr. Dickson on St. Paul's use of the words "flesh" and "spirit," 1883).

<sup>2</sup> In the original Creed of Cæsarea, the basis of the Nicene Creed, we have *σαρκωθέντα* only; in the earlier Creed of Jerusalem *ἐνανθρωπήσαντα* was added, and both terms are found in the Nicene, Constantinopolitan, and Chalcedonian formulæ (see F. Hort's 'Two Dissertations,' pp. 138—150).

taking human nature in its humbled, suffering, tempted form into eternal, absolute union with himself, and by learning through that human nature all that human nature is and fears and needs, there is an infinite fullness of self-humiliating love and sacrifice. Hypostatic union of humanity with the Logos, involving the Logos in the conditions of a complete man, is an infinite humiliation, and seeing that this involved the bitterest conflict and sorrow, brought with it shame, agony, and death, such a stupendous fact is (we believe) assumed to have taken place once in historic time. It is far more than the manifestation in the flesh of Jesus of the Divine light and life. Such an hypothesis would merely consider Jesus as one super-eminent display of "the veritable Light which lighteth every man," whereas what is declared by St. John is that the Word himself, after a new exercise of this infinite potency, became flesh. We are not told *how* this occurred. The fact of the supernatural birth, as stated by the synoptic writers, is their way of announcing a sublime secret, of which John, who was in the confidence of the mother of Jesus, gave a profounder exposition. In such a fact and event we see what St. Paul meant when he said that in the depths of eternity the infinity of love did not consider the undimmed, unclouded, and unchangeable creative majesty of equality with God to be a prize which must never be relinquished, but emptied himself, was made in the likeness of the flesh of sin, and was found in fashion as a man. There was now and for evermore a part of his being in such organic union with "flesh" that he could be born, could learn, could be tempted, suffer from all human frailties and privations, die the death of the cross. The phrase, moreover, implies that the Incarnation was in its nature distinct from the Docetic, angelic, transitory manifestations of the older revelation. In the "Word" becoming "flesh" both Word and flesh remain side by side, and neither is the first nor the second absorbed by the other, and so Monophysitism is repudiated, while the statement of what the Word thus incarnate did, viz. "dwelt among us," etc., cuts away the support of the Nestorian division of the Divine and human natures; inasmuch as what is said of the one nature can be said of the other. To this we turn: "And the Word was made flesh, and set up his tabernacle in our midst." The use of this picturesque word *ἐσκήνωσεν* points to the tabernacle in the wilderness, in which God dwelt (2 Sam. vii. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 67, etc.), and to which reference is made in Lev. xxvi. 11 and Ezek. xxxvii. 28. The localization of Deity, the building a house for the Lord whom the heaven of heavens

could not contain, was a wondrous adumbration of the ultimate proof to be given, that, though God was infinitely great, he was yet capable of turning his glorious face upon those who seek him; though unspeakably holy, awful, majestic, omnipotent, he was yet accessible and merciful and able to save and sanctify his people. The glory of the Lord was the central significance of the tabernacle and temple worship. It was always assumed to be present, even if invisible. The Targums in a great variety of passages substitute for the "glory of the Lord," which is a continuous element in the history of the old covenant, the word "Shechinah," "dwelling," and use the term in obvious reference to the biblical use of the verb *יָשַׁב*, he dwelt, when describing the Lord's familiar and accessible sojourn with his people. It is too much to say that John here adopts the Aramaic phrase, or with certainty refers to it. But *ἐσκήνωσεν* recalls the method by which Jehovah impressed his prophets with his nearness, and came veritably to his own possession. "Now," says John, "the Word made flesh took up his tabernacle in our midst." It is not to be forgotten that John subsequently shows that Jesus identified his body with "the temple" of God (ch. ii. 19, etc.). The "*us*" represents the ground of a personal experience which makes the hypothesis of an Alexandrine origin for the entire representation perfectly impossible. The reference to the old covenant is made more conspicuous: And we contemplated his glory. The *δόξα* corresponds with the visible manifestations of the presence of Jehovah under the Old Testament (Exod. xxiv. 17; xl. 34; Acts vii. 2; Isa. vi. 3; Ezek. i. 28). Dazzling light at the burning bush, in the pillar of fire, on Mount Sinai, at the dedication of tabernacle and temple, etc., revealed the awful fact of the Divine nearness. The eye of believing men saw the real glory of the Logos made flesh when he set up the tabernacle of his humanity among us. It does not follow that all eyes must have seen what the eye of faith could see. The darkness has resisted all the light, the world has not known the Logos; the susceptibilities of believing men enabled them to perceive the glory of the Lord in regions and by a mode of presentation to which unregenerate men have not attained. The apostles saw it in the absolute moral perfection of his holiness and of his charity; of his grace and truth. We can scarcely exclude here a reference to the wondrous vision upon which (as we learn from Matthew, Mark, Luke) John himself gazed on the Mountain of Transfiguration, when the venerable symbol of *Light* reappeared from within the person of the Lord, so linking his personal manifes-

tation of "the Word" with the theophanies of the Old Testament; nor can we forget the sublime vision which John undoubtedly records in the beginning of his Apocalypse. Nevertheless, the glory which the apostles beheld must be distinct from the "glory" which he had with the Father before the world was, and to which (ch. xvii. 24) he prayed that he might return, and the full radiance of which he would ultimately turn upon the eyes of the men whom he had gathered "out of the world." Before that consummation "we," says he, "contemplated his glory as of an only begotten." The *ὁς* implies comparison with the transcendent conception which had entered into his inspired imagining. The word *μονογενής* is used by John to refer to the supreme and unique relation of the Son to the Father (ch. iii. 16, 18, and 1 John iv. 9). It is used of human sons in Luke (vii. 12; viii. 42; ix. 38), and *unigenitus* is the translation in the Vulgate of the Hebrew *יחיד*, where the LXX. gives *ἀγαπητός*, well-beloved (see *ἡγία* Gen. xxii. 2, 12, 16). It corresponds with the *πρωτότοκος* of Col. i. 15 and Heb. i. 6, showing that an analogous thought filled the apostolic mind. By laying stress here on the "glory," and giving historic value and emphasis to the supernatural conception of Jesus, many see in this a reference to the Incarnation wherein he became an only begotten Son of the Father. This would be far more probable if the article had been placed before *μονογενοῦς*. Here the apostle seems to labour to express the glory of One who could thus stand in the eternal relation of the *Logos* to *Θεός*, making it correspond with the relation also subsisting between *μονογενής* and the "Father." Great speciality and peculiarity is here bestowed upon the "only begotten," as it stands in close relationship with those to whom he gives power or capability to become "children of God." They are born into the family of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The glory which John says "we beheld" in his earthly flesh was the effulgence of the uncreated beam which broke through the veil of his flesh, and really convinced us that he was "the Word made flesh." The Tübingen critics see a contradiction here with the prayer of Christ (ch. xvii. 5, 24) for "the glory which he had with the Father." If he shone on earth with such glory as John here describes, why should he desire more? Godet resolves it by insisting on the moral glory of his filial consciousness when he had indeed deprived himself of his Divine perfections. Thus Godet repudiates the two natures of his Person. There is no real contradiction, as we have seen. Some difference of opinion occurs also as to the reference of the *πλήρης*

*χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας*. Some have referred *πλήρης* to the Father, and some to *αὐτοῦ*, though in both cases a break in the construction would be involved, as the antecedent would have been in the genitive. Others, again (founding on the reading of one uncial manuscript, D, which here has *πληρῇ*), refer it to *δόξαν*, and all who thus construe eschew any parenthetical treatment of the previous clause. The latter method is freer from difficulty, as then this clause, *πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας*, is directly and grammatically related with *Λόγος*. The Word was made flesh, and, full of grace and of truth, set up his tabernacle in our midst. Grace and truth are the two methods by which the glory as of "an only begotten" shone upon us, and we beheld it. The combination of these two ideas of grace and truth pervades the Old Testament description of the Lord (cf. Exod. xxxiv. 6; Ps. xl. 10, 11; lxi. 7; xxv. 10). "Grace," the free and royal communication of unlooked-for and of undeserved love, is the key-note of the New Testament. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" is the compendium of all his powers of benediction, and corresponds with the *life* which is "in him," and all the gift of himself to those who came into contact with him. "Truth" is the expression of the thought of God. Truth *per se* can find no larger definition than the perfect revelation of God's eternal thought concerning himself and his universe, and concerning the relations of all things to each other and to him. That which God thinks about these things must be "truth *per se*." Christ claimed to be "the Truth" and "the Life" (ch. xiv. 6), and John here says that it was in virtue of his being the *Logos* of God that he was full of these. Grace and truth, love and revelation, were so transcendent in him; in other words, he was so full, so charged, so overflowing with both, that the glory which shone from him gave apostles this conception about it, viz. that it was that of an only begotten (especially and eternally begotten) and with the Father. The *παρὰ Πατρός* corresponds with the *παρὰ σοῦ* rather than *παρὰ σοῦ* of ch. xvii. 5, and does not, therefore, necessarily suggest more than the premundane condition, answering to the *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν* of ver. 1, and *εἰς τὸν κόσμον* of ver. 18. Erasmus, Paulus, and a few others have associated the *πλήρης*, etc., with the following verse. This is eminently unsatisfactory as unsuited to the character of the Baptist. Moreover, the sixteenth verse, by its reference to Christ's "fulness," positively forbids it.

Ver. 15.—(6) *The testimony to this fact by the prophetic spirit.* The evangelist, in support and vindication of the profound impression produced upon himself and others by the Christ, cites the startling and para-

doxical testimony of the Baptist, which in John's own hearing the great forerunner had twice uttered, under very extraordinary circumstances (see vers. 26, 30). In the later verses this testimony is put in its proper place. Its repetition deepens the impression which the narrative gives of the vivid reality, and of the fact that the evangelist was trusting to a strongly impressed recollection, and is not romanticizing, as the Tübingen critics suppose. The sharp paradoxical form is thoroughly characteristic of the man who called on scribes and Pharisees to "repent," and spoke of God raising up seed to Abraham from the stones of the ground. From the synoptists we learn that John declared that the Coming One was "mightier" than himself, would deal with the Holy Ghost and with fire as he was able to do with water. He knew not the kind of manifestation which was coming on apace. But an enormous change passed over John the Baptist when he came into contact with our Lord, and at his baptism he sank abashed before the revelations which flashed on his soul. The enigmatical form of the Baptist's utterances was the beginning of the evangelist's faith in the personal pre-existence of the Logos who had become flesh in Christ. The testimony of the Baptist is here brought in, as the last great word of the prophetic ministry of the Old Testament, apart from the historic setting in which it afterwards occurs, as if, moreover, it was an abiding word which was yet sounding in the ears of men. The greatest of the sons of woman, and "more than a prophet," he who gathered up in his immense personality all the functions of prophet, priest, Nazarite, and master and teacher of men, the Elijah of the new revelation—John, the very ideal of Divine and supernatural voice in this world of ours, John, the veritable historic man, moreover, to whose disastrous martyrdom some of the Jews (Josephus, 'Ant.' xviii. v. 2) referred the terrible judgments that befell their nation—John beareth witness.<sup>1</sup> That was his function, and his testimony still stands, his "voice" is still heard wherever his great career is known or properly appreciated—in Palestine, in Alexandria, in Ephesus or Corinth. And he crieth (*κέκραγεν*); or, *hath*

*cried*; and the cry is still heard among men: This was he of whom I spake; implying that John uttered words of strange enigmatical significance before he saw Jesus coming to his baptism, and that, as the evangelist subsequently shows, on two memorable occasions, the prophet recalled them and reaffirmed their truthfulness. Before I saw him, I said it: He that is coming after me hath become—hath been in mighty activity—before me. He came forth in many ways from the Father, and was the central reality of the old covenant; *γέγονεν*, he hath come in the voice of the Lord, in the Shechinah-glory, in the Angel of the presence, chronologically "before me." The English Version has followed the traditional interpretation from Chrysostom to Lücke, De Wette, Alford, McLellan, and has seen in this *ἐμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν* a reference to the higher rank or dignity of the Logos incarnate, and translated the second clause "is preferred before me," or "hath been made before me," etc. But such a statement would not have conveyed any thought of great importance. A herald is naturally exceeded and superseded by the dignity and rank of him for whom he prepares the way. Moreover, the two adverbs of place are used in metaphorical sense as adverbs of time (derived from the relative position of individuals in a line or procession), and it is scarcely probable that the second should be used in another sense altogether, which would have disturbed the antithesis between them. On the other hand, Hengstenberg, Meyer, Lange, Godet, etc., recognize the perception of the Baptist, and his utterance of belief in the pre-existence of the Christ, and that from such passages as Isa. vi. 1 and Mal. iii. 1 he knew that he who was coming into the world, and about to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, to take the fan in his hand, etc., had been in reality *before him*. The difficulty of this interpretation is said to be that the proof which follows—because, or *for* (*πρῶτός μου ἦν*), he was before me—would be tautologous in the extreme; the reason given for the Lord having become before him being simply the asseveration of the fact. But the two very remarkable expressions, *ἐμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν* and *πρῶτός μου ἦν*, are not identical. The first may easily refer to the historic precedence of the activity of the Coming One in all the operations of the Logos; the second may refer to the absolute and eternal precedence of the Logos in itself. If so, the whole significance of the previous fourteen verses is gathered up, and shown to have been flashed upon the consciousness of John the Baptist, and uttered with such intensity that the evangelist caught the idea, and saw in it the key to the whole mystery. It would seem, however, that the *ὅτι πρῶτός μου* did not form

<sup>1</sup> N here reads *κέκραγεν οὗτος ἦν δ' ὁπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ὃς ἐμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν*, omitting *ὃν εἶπον*, and introducing *ὃς* before *ἐμπροσθέν*. This is rejected by Westcott and Hort and Tischendorf (8th edit.). The text of Westcott and Hort is *κέκραγεν λέγων—οὗτος ἦν δ' ἐπ' αὐτόν—δ' ὁπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἐμπροσθεν*, etc. 'Ο ἴππων is found in one correction of B, B, C. Westcott does not adopt it in his commentary; Tischendorf (8th edit.) speaks of it as "inept;" R.T. places it in the margin.

part of the original utterance of John. After the baptism, the whole truth had broken upon the Baptist, and he clenched or saw an explanation of the mystery.

Vers. 16—18.—(7) *The experience of the writer.*

Ver. 16.—There can be little doubt that the fifteenth verse is a parenthetical clause, answering to the sixth and seventh verses, and standing to ver. 14 very much in the same kind of relation that vers. 6, 7 do to vers. 1—5. There is a further reason; the verses which follow are clearly not, as Lange suggests, the continuance of the Baptist's μαρτυρία, but the language of the evangelist, and a detail of his personal experience. The entire context would entirely forbid our taking the αὐτοῦ of ver. 16 as referring to the Baptist. This is still more evident from the true reading of ὅτι in place of καί.<sup>1</sup> The "because" points back at once to the statements of ver. 14. Hengstenberg and Godet think there is no need to transform the fifteenth verse into a parenthesis, in order, after the recital of John the Baptist's testimony, to proceed to a further experience of the evangelist; translating "*and even,*" Lange makes the whole utterance to be that of the Baptist, which appears to be profoundly inconsistent with the position of the Baptist, either then or subsequently. The grand declaration, that the Logos incarnate was "full of grace and truth," is justified by the author of the prologue, from his conscious experience of the exhaustless plenitude of the manifestation. Because from his fulness we all received. He speaks as from the bosom of a society of persons, who have not been dependent on vision or on individual contact with the historic revelation (comp. ch. xx., "Blessed are they [Jesus said] who have not seen [touched or handled], and yet have believed," but have nevertheless discovered a perennial supply of grace and truth in him). We all, my fellow-apostles and a multitude which no man can number, received from this source, as from the Divinity itself, all that we have needed. An effort has been made, from the evangelist's use of the word *pleroma*, to father the "prologue" upon one familiar with the Valentinian metaphysic, and thus to postpone its origin to the middle of the second century; but the Valentinian *pleroma* is the sum total of the Divine emanations of the thirty pairs

of sons, which have been produced from the eternal "bythos," or abyss, one only of which is supposed, on Valentinian principles, to have assumed a phantasmic form in Jesus Christ. Nothing could be less resembling the position of the author of this Gospel, who clearly regards the Logos incarnate as coincident with the fulness of the Godhead, as containing in himself, in complete self-possession, all the energies and beneficence of the Eternal. With the apostle's doctrine of the Logos as identical with God, as the Creator of everything, as the Life, as the Light of men; and, as becoming the Source of all these energies to men in his incarnation, there is no basis for Valentinianism. Though the phraseology of the Gnostics was borrowed in part from the Gospel, and though Valentinus may have fancied himself justified in his misuse of texts; the ideas of the Gospel and the Gnostic were directly contradictory of one another (see Introduction). Long before John used this word, St. Paul had used it in writing to the Ephesians and Colossians, as though, even in his day, the word had acquired a distinct theological meaning, and one that had naturally arisen from its etymology and usage in Greek writers. Bishop Lightfoot has shown in his dissertation ('Epistle to Colossians,' 2nd edit., pp. 257—273) that the form of the word demands a passive sense, *id quod impletur*, and not an active one which some have given to it in certain New Testament passages, as if it had the meaning of *id quod implet*. By his examination of numerous passages, he shows that it always has fundamentally the sense of *completeness*, "*the full complement*," the *plenitude*. Πληρόμα is the passive verbal from πληροῦν, to make complete. Thus Col. i. 19, "The Father was pleased that all the fulness, the totality, should dwell in him," explained elsewhere in the same Epistle, "all the completeness, the plenitude of the Godhead" (ii. 9). The widespread diffusion of the idea of emanations, the hypostatizing of perfections and attributes, the virtual mythology which was creeping through metaphysical subtleties, even into Judaism and Christianity, demanded positive repudiation; and, while the whole Church was united in its recognition of the Divine energy of Christ, it became needful to refer to his Divine-human personality all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In Ephesians St. Paul speaks, however, of the Church which is his body as identified with him, and as (in Eph. v. 27) a bride made one flesh with her husband, without spot or wrinkle, ideally perfect, as the part of one colossal individuality of which Christ is the Head; or, the one building of which he is the Foundation and the Corner-stone. Hence "the fulness of Christ"

<sup>1</sup> N, B, C\*, D, L, X, 33, with versions and folios, read the former, and are followed by Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, Westcott and Hort. There is considerable authority for καί, which is still preferred by Godet and Hengstenberg, and in margin of Lachmann and Bäle Revisers.

(Eph. iv. 13) is that in which every member participates, and "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" is equated with the perfect humanity into which all believers come. Hence in Eph. iii. 19 these individuals are completed in him, and are thus as a whole, by the realization of their union to Christ, participators in the fulness of God. So the difficult expression, Eph. i. 23, becomes explained, a passage in which the Church itself, his body, is said to be "the fulness of him who filleth all in all." The Church is the organ and sphere in which all the Divine graces are poured, and is considered as ever struggling to embody the ideal perfection of him in whom all the fulness of God dwells. Both ideas, those of both the Christological Epistles, are involved in this great assertion of St. John. And grace for grace. It is said the evangelist might have written *χαρίν ἐν τῇ χάριτι*, or *ἐν τῇ χάριτι*, grace in addition to grace received already; but the use of the preposition *ἀντὶ*, implies more, "grace interchanging with grace" (Meyer)—not the grace of the old covenant replaced by the grace of the new dispensation (Chrysostom, Lampe, and many others), for, though there was grace underlying all God's self-revelation, yet in the next verse the contrast between "Law" and "grace" is too striking to be ignored. The grace replaced by grace means that every grace received is a capacity for higher blessedness. Thus Christian humility is the condition of Divine uplifting; the knowledge that leads to love is the condition of that higher gnosis that is born of love. The faith that accepts mercy blossoms into the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Reconciliation with God becomes itself transformed into active communion with him; all union to Christ becomes the harbinger of full identification with him, "he in us and we in him." This is the great principle of the Divine kingdom: "To him that hath shall be given."

Ver. 17.—The *χαρίν ἀντὶ χάριτος* is sustained by calling attention to the contrast between the two methods of Divine communication. Because the Law was given through Moses; "Law," which in Paul's writings had been even looked at by itself as an "antithesis to grace" (Rom. iv. 15; vi. 14; vii. 3; x. 4; Gal. iii. 10; iv. 4). The Law principle of approach to God falls through the weakness of the flesh. The will is too far enslaved for it to yield spontaneously to the majesty of the Lawgiver, or to feel the attractions of obedience. The Law condemns,—it is incapable of justifying the ungodly; the Law terrifies,—it never reconciles. The Law even provokes to sin and excites the passions which it punishes. Law was *given* through Moses, pointing to the historic fact of the pomp and splendour

of its first delivery, associated therefore with the greatest human name in all past history. Law was a "gift," a Divine bestowment of entirely unspeakable value to those who were ignorant of the mind and will of God. Even the ministration of death was glorious. The knowledge of an ideal perfection is a great advance, even though no power should accompany the ideal to draw the soul towards it. To know what is right, even without help to do it, save in the form of sanction, or penalty appealing to the lower nature, is better and nobler than to sin in utter ignorance. The Law was given "through" the mind, voice, conscience, and will of Moses. And alongside of him may be supposed to be ranged all the mighty sages and legislators of the human race—all who have thus been the mouthpiece of the Divine idea, all who have impressed the "ought" and "ought not," the "shall" and "shall not," upon mankind. Moses is not the author of the Law, the "giving" of the Law was not by Moses, but through his instrumentality. Grace and truth, however, came—became, passed into activity in human nature—through Jesus Christ. For "grace and truth" (see notes, ver. 14), the highest manifestation and self-communication of Divine love and Divine thought, came into human experience through Jesus Christ. A vast and wonderful contrast is here made between all earlier or other dispensations and that of which the apostle proceeds to speak. Divine favour and help, the life of God himself in the soul of man, awakening love in response to the Divine love; and Divine thought so made known as to bring all the higher faculties of man into direct contact with reality, are an enormous advance upon Lawgiving. The appropriate human response to Law is obedience; the appropriate human response to love is of the same nature with itself—nothing less than love; so the only adequate response to Divine truth is faith; to Divine thought may follow human thought. All this forth-streaming of grace and truth originated in the person of *Jesus Christ*, and became possible through him. This great Name, this blending of the human and Divine, of saving grace and Messianic dignity, of ancient expectations and recent realization, is only twice more used in the Gospel (ch. xvii. 3 and xx. 31); but it pervades it throughout, and, though not actually said to be equivalent to the *Word made flesh*, yet no shadow of doubt is left that this was the apostle's meaning. Here the full significance of the prologue really bursts into view to one who reads it for the first time (cf. 1 John i. 1—3). Difficulty may be felt by some as to the actual capacity of Jesus Christ to reveal the Divine thought, or the truth, and so the closing verse of the prologue vindicates

cates the claim of the Saviour of the world to be the truth (cf. ch. xiv. 6).

Ver. 18.—No one hath ever yet seen God. Many visions, theophanies, appearances, angelic splendours, in the desert, on the mountain, in the temple, by the river of Chebar, had been granted to the prophets of the Lord; but they have all fallen short of the direct intuition of God as God. Abraham, Israel, Moses, Manóah, David, Isaiah, Ezekiel, saw visions, local manifestations, anticipations of the Incarnation; but the apostle here takes the Lord's own word for it (ch. v. 37), and he elsewhere repeats it (1 John iv. 12). These were but forerunners of the ultimate manifestation of the Logos. "The Glory of the Lord," "the Angel of the Lord," "the Word of the Lord," were not so revealed to patriarchs that they saw God as God. They saw him in the form of light, or of spiritual agency, or of human ministries; but in the deepest sense we must still wait for the purity of heart which will reveal to our weakened faculties the beatific vision. The only begotten Son—or, (God only begotten<sup>1</sup>)—who is in (or, on) the bosom of the

Father, he interpreted (him); became the satisfying Exposition, the Declarer, drawing forth from the depths of God all that it is

capable of an Arian signification, and is by no means needed as a support of the true Deity of the Son. The common reading is sustained by A, C<sup>3</sup>, E, X, and fourteen other uncials, by all known cursives except 33, by the Old Latin, the Vulgate, the Old Syriac, Harclean Syriac, the Jerusalem Syriac lectionary, the Armenian and Æthiopic Versions, by Tertullian ('Adv. Prax.', c. 15), Eusebius (in six places), Athanasius (four), Chrysostom (eight), Ambrose, Augustine, Hilary (seven, though in one place he reads, "*unigenitus Deus in sinu Patris*," 'De Trinit.', xii. 24). Irenæus, Origen, Basil, Cyril, can scarcely be claimed on either side, as they make use in this connection of both *Θεός* and *υἱός*. Theodore of Mopsuestia, and with doubtful context Alexander of Alexandria, and Gregory of Nazianzus, give the common text. Dr. Abbott adds many others, and enumerates the Latin Fathers, Hilary, I'hæbadius, V. Afer, Ambrose (seven), Jerome, Faustin (three), Augustine, and others. He shows that Tregelles has been inaccurate in his citations from the Fathers, and undervalued the testimony against the reading of the ancient codices. To set over against this very wide diffusion of evidence, *ΘΕΟΣ* is read by N, B, C<sup>4</sup>, L, four of the codices most trusted by the modern school, the special cursive 33, by the Memphitic Version, by Peschito Syriac, and the margin of Harclean Syriac, by the Valentinians, by Irenæus once or twice, by Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen ('Eus.'), Epiphanius, Gregory of Nyssa, by Arius ('Ap. Ath.'), and others. Fulgentius repeatedly adopts it as a theological term. From this enumeration it would seem that the question really turns on the value to be attributed to N and B; and with reference to the former it cannot be concealed that N omits the following words, *ὁ ὢν*, which detracts from the value of its authority. The argument of alteration by copyists is in favour of transposition from *ΘC* to *TC*, as *to* the more ordinary and customary phrase, than *vice versâ*.

A special reading, *ὁ μονογενὴς Θεός*, does not occur in any ancient Greek codex, though found in Epiphanius. Some other modifications of the phrase occur, such as *υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ* and *υἱὸς Θεός*. One Latin copy reads *unigenitus* without either *filius* or *Deus*. Professor Hort has taken the whole of Dr. Abbott's facts into consideration, and adheres to the originality of the reading *Θεός*; and Harnack and Westcott agree with Tregelles, and so also Dr. Plummer and Archdeacon Watkins regard the question as settled. It will not be generally regarded

<sup>1</sup> The reading *μονογενὴς Θεός*, in place of *ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός*, has greatly exercised modern critics, and the most abundant information may be obtained against and for the unfamiliar phrase in Dr. Ezra Abbott's dissertation 'Bibliotheca Sacra' (1861), and Dr. Hort's 'Two Dissertations' (1876). Tischendorf (8th edit.) has finally adopted *ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός* with the R.T. With them Godel, Alford, Meyer (who styles the other reading a dogmatic gloss), Lücke, and a majority of modern critics agree. Tregelles, antecedent to his acquaintance with the Sinaitic manuscript (N), called attention to the reading *Θεός* without the article before *μονογενὴς*, and chiefly on the ground of the patristic use of the term, with or without direct quotation from the passage before us. Dr. Hort has sustained it with great learning, endeavouring to refute the objections, (1) that the phrase is unfamiliar to the Christian theologian; (2) that it is inconsistent with the theology of the prologue or of the New Testament; (3) that it could have been foisted into the text from its currency in ancient Creeds, although the frequency of the use of the term, apart from scriptural context, may have been occasioned by its presence in some of the early Creeds out of which the phraseology of the Nicene Creed was fashioned. He shows that, though *μονογενὴς Θεός* was used by the writers of the fourth century, it was not used to further special dogmatic conclusions. He proves that Arius himself was accustomed to it, and that Eusebius and the Apostolical Constitutions made use of it. Hence it is



possible that we shall see, know, or realize. This lofty assertion is augmented by the sublime intensification of the earlier phrase, "with God (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*)," by (*εἰς τὸν κόλπον*), "in or on the bosom of the Father;" i.e. in most intimate and loving fellowship with the Father as the only begotten. The relations of fatherhood and sonship within the substance of the Godhead give new life, warmth, realization, to the vaster, colder, more metaphysical, metaphenomenal relations of *Θεός* and *Λόγος* (cf. here Prov. viii. 30). Bengel here says, "In lumbis esse dicuntur qui nascuntur homines, in sinu sunt qui nati sunt. In sinu Patris erat Filius, quia nunquam non-natus." In view of the contention of Meyer that the language here refers to no agelong, eternal indwelling of the Logos with, or of the Son (God only begotten) on the bosom of, the Father, but to the exaltation of the Christ after his ascension, we can only refer to the present tense (*ὁ ὢν*), which from the standpoint of the prologue does not transfer itself to the historical standpoint of the writer at the end of the first century. Lange thinks that the whole of this wonderful utterance is attributed by the evangelist to the Baptist; but the standing of the Baptist, lofty as it is in John's Gospel, after the Baptist came into brief fellowship with the One who was before him, certainly falls short of this insight into his eternal Being. John the beloved disciple could thus speak of the revelation and interpretation of God which was made in the life, words, and death of the Only Begotten, from whose fulness he had received "grace for grace;" but in this verse he is speaking of the timeless condition, the eternal fellowship, of the Only Begotten with the Father, as justifying the fulness of the revelation made in his incarnation.

The prologue forms a key to the entire Gospel. It may have been written after the record of the central principles involved in the life-work of Jesus had been completed. Every statement in it may be seen to be

as settled until the great question of the deference to be yielded to N and B in combination is finally determined. Wordsworth, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Scrivener, have adhered to the received text.

With reference to the sense and legitimacy or congruity of the phrase with the rest of the prologue, it is obvious that "God only begotten" does but bring into one statement what has been already implied in ver. 1—that "the Logos was God," and that his glory (ver. 14) was "as that of an only begotten of the Father."

derived from the recorded words or acts of the Lord, the revelation of the Father in time, the unveiling of the eternal heart of him who made all things, and by one competent to speak of both eternities. The writer of the prologue speaks of himself as one of a group or society who had had ocular evidence of the perfection and glory of the manifestation. This fellowship of men had found themselves children of God, and in the possession of a life, a light, and a hope which were derived entirely from *Jesus Christ*, who is undoubtedly in a unique sense declared (though not formally defined) to be "the Word made flesh." In the subsequent narrative we find a graduated series of instructions on the powers of Christ and the opposition of the world to his self-manifestation. Thus (ch. i.) the testimony of the Baptist (made after his contact with Christ) to the Person and work of the Lord attributes to him, on prophetic authority, most stupendous functions—those of baptizing with the Holy Spirit, and taking away the sin of the world. He does himself reveal the way to the Father. He is hailed as the "Christ," the "King of Israel," and as the link between heaven and earth, between the invisible and visible, the Divine and the human (ch. i. 51). In ch. ii., with all its other suggestiveness, Christ displays his creative power, and (cf. ch. vi.) his relation to the world of things, as well as his organic relation to the old covenant. In ch. ii. his "body" is the "temple" of God, where his Father dwelt, thus justifying the *ἐκλήνωσεν* of ver. 14. The pre-existence of Christ as a self-conscious personality in the very substance of Deity is asserted by himself in ch. vi. 62; viii. 58; xvii. 5, 24. The fact that he is the Source of all life (ch. i. 3), is involved in the teaching of the Gospel from end to end. Eternal life is ministered through him, to believers (ch. iii. 16, etc., 36). He claims to have life in himself (ch. v. 26). He is the "Bread of life" for starving humanity (ch. vi. 35, 48). The words that he speaks are spirit and life (ch. vi. 63). In ch. viii. 12 the *φῶς τῆς ζωῆς* links the idea of life and light as they are shown to cohere in the prologue. In ch. xiv. 6 he declares himself to be "the Truth and the Life," thus sustaining the great generalization. By raising Lazarus he is portrayed

as the Restorer of forfeited life, as well as the original Giver of life to men (ch. xi. 25). The ninth chapter records the symbolic event by which he proved himself to be the Sun of the spiritual universe, "the Light of the world" (cf. ch. i. 4 with viii. 12; cf. ch. xii. 36, 46). The whole history of the conflict with the people whom he came to save, with "his own," with the world-power, and the death-doom, is the material which is generalized in the solemn statements of ch. i. 5—10.

The prologue says nothing in express words of Christ's supernatural conception, of his death, or of his resurrection and eternal glory; yet these objective facts are woven through, and involved in, the entire context, for the incarnation of the Eternal Word is the historic basis of the apostle's experience of such a life as that which he proceeds to sketch. The absolute antagonism of the darkness to the light, and the rejection of the light and life by the world, never had such exposition as that which the repudiation and crucifixion of the Son of God gave to them; while the eternal nature of the central life and being of him who, when incarnate, was thus resisted by unbelief renders the resurrection and ultimate and eternal glory a necessity of thought even to those who have not yet seen, but yet have believed.

**Vers. 19—34.—2. The testimony of the Baptist.**

Ver. 19.—The historic narrative commences with the nineteenth verse of the chapter. The scene is laid after the ministry of John had reached its climax in the baptism of Jesus—an event presupposed and implied, but not described. John's ministry had produced the most amazing excitement among the people. They had flocked to his side and to his baptism, confessing their sins; they had heard his summons to repentance; they had trembled under his threats of judgment; they had received their appropriate message from the inspired seer. His prophetic indignation against their selfishness and greed, their formalism, and their boast of covenanted immunity from the consequences of moral fault, had roused conscience into preternatural activity. The wail of concern and the excitement of alarmed inquiry had as yet only secured from John the promise of another Teacher, of Another, mightier than he, whose fan was in his hand, who would test, divide, save,

and punish. When the Christ came himself to this baptism, came confessing the sins of the whole world, came with awful holiness and yet infinite sympathy for the sorrows and perils of the people, to fulfil all righteousness, a new revelation was made to John. The voice from heaven, the symbol of the Holy Spirit which descended and abode upon him, brought John into a new world. He was as one dazed and bewildered by excess of light. The abundance of the revelations became a new test of his own mission, and a new explanation to him of what his purpose in the world had really been. The contrast between the ministry of John as detailed by the synoptists and the Fourth Gospel is explicable so soon as we observe that the latter takes up the career of John where the former had laid it down. Here, consequently, is a chapter in John's history concerning which the synoptists are silent. When the baptism of Jesus was accomplished, and the Spirit had led him away into the wilderness, John stood, much as Elisha might have done (in the very same region) when Elijah went heavenwards in a chariot of fire. But he proceeded to testify new and strange things about his kinsman. The effect of his ministry was, for the time, greatly augmented by the suspense and expectation of some rapidly approaching manifestation. In the midst of the excitement thus produced we learn from this verse: **And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent (to him) from Jerusalem priests and Levites, that, etc.** The copula "and" shows how the narrative roots itself in the prologue, and points back to the citation already made from John's words. In ver. 15 they were introduced apart from their historical connection as the summation of the highest and most fruitful mission of the Baptist. Now the precise antecedents which give to them special weight are set forth. "This" is the predicate of the sentence. The occasion referred to is when "the Jews" sent their deputation. The evangelist is accused of always using the term, "the Jews," in a sense that is hostile to them, and thus an argument has been framed against the authenticity of the Gospel. It is true that John uses this term far more frequently than the synoptists (Matthew five times, Mark seven times, Luke five times), for it is found more than seventy times in his Gospel; but it is not exclusively used in a depreciatory sense

<sup>1</sup> Ἰπὸς αὐτὸν is introduced by Lachmann, Tregelles, Alford, R.T., and Westcott and Hort, into the text, on the authority of B, C\*, 33, not by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Lange, or Bala Revisers.

(see ch. ii. 13; iii. 1; iv. 22; v. 1; xviii. 33). For the most part he uses the term (now denotative of the entire people, though formerly confined to the tribe of Judah) for the theocratic nation which had ceased, when he composed his Gospel, to have any political existence. More than this, in a vast number of texts he uses the term for the authoritative powers of the nation rather than of the people. According to the narrative of each of the Gospels, the theocratic people displayed, by its highest representatives and ruling powers, rancorous hatred and calculated antagonism to the Son of God. (See Introduction for proof that, notwithstanding this separation of the evangelist's mind from them, he must have been a Palestinian Jew himself.) The Jews, the ecclesiastical party, sent a deputation of priests and Levites from Jerusalem, which consisted, as we learn from the twenty-third verse, "of the Pharisees." They came to make a legitimate inquiry from the new prophet. There is no trace of malignity or antagonism in this act. They would learn from his own lips who he was, what character or functions he was sustaining. A similar deputation approached our Lord at a later period, when all their jealousy and hatred had been aroused. There was, however, no better way in which they could learn the facts of the case. The *Sanhedrin*, or great council of seventy-one members, the elders, high priests (including ex-high priests), and scribes, is variously described. There is no early trace anterior to the time of Antipater and Herod of this body as thus constituted, but it was doubtless formed upon the basis of the older institution of the seventy elders (Numb. xi. 16; Ezek. viii. 11), or of the *γερουσία* of the Books of Maccabees (1 Macc. xii. 6; 2 Macc. i. 10). It is probable (Hengstenberg) that the Levites here mentioned by John represent those who in the other Gospels are described as "scribes," or students of the Law, belonging to the sacred tribe, though not to the family of Aaron. The absence of any reference to the Levites in Matthew and Mark (Luke x. 32; Acts iv. 36), and the frequent occurrence of "scribes," make it probable that the profession of the Law was specially followed by the remnant of the tribe of Levi (but see Schürer, 'Jewish People in Time of Christ,' §§ 24, 25). The deputation came to receive and convey to those that sent them definite replies to certain questions. In Luke iii. 15 there is said to have been a widespread impression that John the Baptist was supposed to be the Christ of their popular expectation. Such a portentous claim must be sifted by them without delay. They were sent that they should put the question to him, Who art thou?

John's profession of a baptizer, and his implied teaching that "Pharisees and Sadducees," the covenanted, sacramental people, needed cleansing and admission by some sacred rite into a fellowship more holy than that of the theocratic nation itself, demanded immediate examination; and they were justified by the letter of the Law in making the inquiry (Deut. xviii. 21).

Vers. 20, 21.—(1) *He defines his own position, negatively.*

Ver. 20.—And he confessed, and denied not. Perhaps the double form of statement, or rather the introduction of the clause, "he denied not," before the repetition of the confession with its contents, was adopted to indicate that John might have been tempted to "deny" that he was *not* the Christ. If he had hesitated at all, he would have denied the real Christ, the Son of God, who had been revealed to him by special means. I for my part—very emphatic—am <sup>1</sup> not the Christ. This implies, not only that the supposition over which they are brooding is unfounded, not only that he is not the Christ, but that he knows more, and that he knows another to be the Christ. If this reading of the text is correct, the Baptist, by his negative reply, gave to the priests more than they asked.

Ver. 21.—And they asked him, What then? What is the state of the case? The very repudiation of Messiahship in this form seems to imply some association with the Messianic period of which they had so many conflicting ideas. Malachi (iv. 5) had predicted the coming again from heaven of Elijah the prophet, and the LXX., by translating the passage "Elijah the Tishbite," had strengthened the common mistake of a metempsychosis, or such an abnormal manifestation before the coming of Messiah. Schöttgen ('De Messia,' H. H., vol. ii. pp. 226, 490, 533—537) quotes a variety of proofs of this anticipation, and that Elijah was expected "three days before Messiah; that he would come in the mountains of Israel, weeping over the people, saying, 'O land of Israel, how long will you remain arid and desolate!'" (cf. my 'John the Baptist,' iii. § 4). There was a true sense in which (as our Lord informed his disciples) John was the fulfilment of Malachi's prediction and of the language of the angel to Zacharias (Luke i. 17; Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12), and that John came veritably in the spirit and power of Elijah. In that sense "Elijah had come already," just as Christ their *David* had come, in fulfilment of Ezekiel's

<sup>1</sup> Ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι is the better reading, and, with N, A, B, C\*, X, is read by Tregelles, Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, but not by R.T.

vision (Ezek. xxxvii. 24; cf. Jer. xxx. 9; Hos. iii. 5), to rule over them. In the physical, superstitious sense, John the son of Zacharias was not the reincarnation of the Prophet Elijah, and so he boldly answered the inquiry, *Art thou Elijah?*<sup>1</sup> with a categorical negative: *I am not.* They press their question once more. *Art thou the Prophet?* It is doubtful whether they here take up another popular expectation of the physical return of one of the old prophets, or whether, with an exegesis afterwards modified by the apostles, they point to Deut. xviii. 15, and reveal the fact that they had not identified the prediction of "the prophet like unto Moses" with their Messiah. If they had identified these representations, they would not, of course, have pressed him with an identical question. It is highly probable that that prophecy had, with the predictions of Malachi and Isaiah, led to numerous expectations more or less identified with the Messianic cycle of coming events. In ch. vi. 14; vii. 40; Matt. xvi. 14, we see the prevalence of the expectation—of a longing for an old prophet. They yearned for no upstart, but for one of the mighty brotherhood of departed men, in veritable flesh and blood. Now John and now Jesus was crudely suspected by some to be such a resurrection. The Baptist, like the Samaritan woman, and subsequently St. Peter when full of the Holy Ghost, had sharply identified "the Prophet like unto Moses" with the Messiah himself; and therefore, on either hypothesis, he gives a curt reply to this inquiry, and he answered, *No.*

Vers. 22, 23.—(2) *He defines his position, positively.*

Ver. 22.—They said therefore (note the demonstrative force of *οὗν*) to him (as a consequence of his repeated threefold negative), *Who art thou?* Explain yourself, that we may give an answer to those who sent us (see note, ch. xx. 21, on the two verbs *ἀποστέλλω* and *πέμπω*); *What sayest thou concerning thyself?* Our suppositions about thee are all repudiated one by one, hast thou any information to render to the supreme court of judicature?

Ver. 23.—He said, *I am a voice crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.* This great utterance had been by the synoptists distinctly applied to the Baptist (Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4); here we have the origin of such application. The Baptist

quoted from Isa. xl. 3 two sentences; the synoptists cite the whole passage, as finding abundant realization in the mission of John. The prophet felt that the work he had to perform entirely concealed the importance of his own personality. He lost himself in his office and in his message. Isaiah, when foreseeing the revival of the nation, then wandering in a spiritual "wilderness," along rugged ridges, savage precipices, stony gorges, of a symbolic desert, anticipated the return of the Jehovah to his own sanctuary, and declared that ample prophetic preparation was needed, so that the people, by repentance and reformation, might understand that Israel had received double for all her sins. "Hark!" says he, "a crier, or a voice." The herald has gone forth to break the silence that lay between the land of captivity and the land of promise. "In the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Lord." Israel was to see that there was neither self-righteousness nor moral rebellion to impede the approach of One who was mighty to save. A portion of this very oracle is quoted by Malachi when he exclaims, "Behold, I send my messenger before my face, who shall prepare the way before me." This "messenger before the face of the Lord" is no other than he who should come in the spirit and power of Elijah. John, therefore, gathered up the significance of both prophecies, when he spoke of himself as "a voice crying in the wilderness [actual and symbolical]. Make straight the way of the Lord." The Hebrew text, as we have translated it above, associates the words, "in the wilderness," with "make straight," rather than with "the voice crying." The quotation by the evangelist from the LXX. will suffer either arrangement of the words.

Ver. 24.—And they<sup>1</sup> had been sent from the Pharisees, which amounts to the same thing as "they which were sent were of the Pharisees," and it is after the manner of John to introduce explanatory, retrospective comment, which may throw light on what follows (vers. 41, 45; ch. iv. 30; xi. 5). The

<sup>1</sup> T.R. and Lachmann insert *ἔδ* after *ἤλίας* *et*; but Tischendorf (8th edit.) and the Bâle Revisers omit it. The slight but numerous variations in text and Latin versions seem to have rendered the insertion dubious.

<sup>1</sup> The article of is omitted before *ἀπεσταλμένοι* by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T., on the authority of N\*, A\*, B, C, I, and an early quotation from Origen, who gathers from it the idea of a second deputation of the Pharisees. Without the article, it might be translated, "and the Pharisees were sent." Meyer thinks this renders the omission very suspicious. Westcott, however, translates it with a supplementary sense, "they had been sent from," etc. The article has great manuscript authority, and is preferred by Meyer, Godet, etc.

οὗ of the following verse shows that we have still to do with the same deputation. The Pharisees were accustomed to lustral rites, but had legal points to make as to the authority of any man who dared to impose them upon the sacred nation, and especially on their own section, which made its special boast of ceremonial exactitude and purity. They might justify an old prophet, or the Elijah of Malachi, and still more the Christ himself, should he call men to baptismal cleansing. But the dim mysterious "voice in the wilderness," even if John could prove his words, had no such prescriptive claim. The Pharisaic priests and Levites would take strong views on the baptismal question, and even exalt it into a more eminent place in their thoughts than the fundamental question, "Art thou the very Christ?" The same confusion of essential and accidental elements of religious truth and life was not confined to old Pharisees.

Ver. 25.—And they asked him (put the question), and said to him, Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not<sup>1</sup> the Christ, not Elijah, not the prophet? It would seem that, judging from such expressions as Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26 and Zech. xiii. 1, the Jews expected some renewal of ceremonial purification on a grand scale at the Messianic appearance, and John's repudiation of every personal rank, which could, according to their view, justify him called for some explanation.

Vers. 26, 27.—The answer is not very explicit. John answered them and said, I baptize with water; not as Messiah, or Elijah, or resuscitated prophet, not as making proselytes to the faith of Abraham's sons, not as an Essene admitting the children of the kingdom to a close spiritual corporation, but because the Messiah has come. Some have laid great emphasis on the limitation which John assigns to his baptism. It is said he thus anticipated the contrast afterwards expressed between it and the Spirit-baptism of Jesus. This is, however, reserved for a later utterance. The baptism with water inaugurated the Messianic kingdom, prepared the people to receive the Lord. If, then, Messiah were reasonably expected thus to create a fellowship of those, who, substituted this simple illustration for a cumbrous cycle of ceremonial purifications, John, as the "voice," the "herald," the "crier" in the wilderness, was justified in administering the rite. I baptize with

water, seeing that there standeth<sup>1</sup> in the midst of you<sup>2</sup> one (whom you know not) who is coming after me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to loose. This standing in the very crowd before him of the Mightier than John, now being searched out as it were by the glances of the Baptist, and recognized by him as One over whom the heavens had opened, gave ample support to the Baptist in his baptismal functions. The One coming after John, *i.e.* "after," because of John's chronological precedence in showing himself to Israel, is yet of such lofty rank and mighty power that John is not fit in his own opinion to be his humblest slave. This solemn assurance justifies to the Sanhedrin the preparatory rite. This closes the first great testimony. Before proceeding to the second, the evangelist supplies a geographical hint, which up to the present day has not been satisfactorily interpreted.

Ver. 28.—These things were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.<sup>3</sup> The fact that John the Baptist,

<sup>1</sup> Στήκει is read by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, with B, L, T; in place of ἑστῆκει, with Lachmann, T.R., and margin of Tregelles, and Bâle Révisers, on the authority of A, C, X, γ, and other uncials. ἑστῆκει is the reading of N, G.

<sup>2</sup> T.R. and Lachmann introduce ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν after ἐρχόμενος, with A, C<sup>3</sup>, X, γ, etc.; but Tregelles, Tischendorf, Alford, and Westcott and Hort omit it, with N, B, C<sup>4</sup>, L, T, etc. The omission of δέ after μέσος, on the authority of N, A, C<sup>4</sup>, L, numerous cursives and versions, by modern editors, renders the omission of the ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν more comprehensible, and leaves a good meaning to the verse; but the omission of the clause creates an unnecessary difficulty again in ver. 30, where John appears to refer back to this utterance with additional explanation.

<sup>3</sup> Little doubt now remains that ἐν Βηθανίᾳ was the original reading of the text. It is found in N<sup>4</sup>, A, B, C<sup>4</sup>, E, F, G, H, X, and other uncials, both Syriac Versions, Old Latin, Memphitic, Armenian, including several cursives. The reading Βηθαβαρά was found apparently by Origen in some copies, though he knew of the reading Βηθανίᾳ, and distinctly referred to it, discarding the latter on geographical grounds. He knew that Bethany was fifteen stadia from Jerusalem, was not on the other side of Jordan, and, not being able to find any place of that name, he adopted the reading "Bethabara." He probably is the author of the reading "Bethabara," which crept into secondary uncials and cursives, and was adopted by T.R. The latter name, however, occurs in several different forms: Βηθαβαρά, as found in C<sup>4</sup>, K,

<sup>1</sup> The T.R. reads οὗρε, οὗρε on small authority, but οὐδέ, οὐδέ are found in N, A, B, C, L, 1, 33, 124, and in six quotations from Origen, and adopted by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort. R.T., etc., and yield better sense.

in the previous verses, recognizes the Messiah, and that in vers. 31—33 he declares that knowledge to have followed the baptism and

T, U, A, Π; Βαθαβαρά, in Cursive MSS. 69, 262. Βηθαρά, Βαβαρά, Βηθεραβαρά, are other forms that the name assumes in some of Origen's references to it. Epiphanius called attention to the two readings, as did Chrysostom. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, Alford, Meyer, Godet, Westcott and Hort, R.T., etc., have all reverted to the best-attested reading. There was such a place as Bethabara, בֵּית-עַבְרָא, a "house of ford," beyond Jordan. It is found in 'Onomasticon' of Eusebius, is referred to in the Old Testament (Josh. xv. 6, 61; xviii. 22). The suggestion has been made that, since בֵּית-עַבְרָא may mean "the house of ship," or ferry, that the two names may, at different periods, have been attached to the same place. Against this it has been said that the true etymology of Βηθανία, equivalent to בֵּית-עַבְרָא, is a "house of dates" (Lightfoot). This may be true. The Greek form of the name may (as in other analogous instances) represent two Hebrew words, just as the "Abel" of Gen. iv. 2 is a different Hebrew word from the "Abel" of 2 Sam. xx. 14.

The fact that there should be two Bethanias is no more astonishing than that there should be two Bethsaidas (Luke ix. 10; Mark vi. 45), two Carnels, two Casareas, two Antiochs, two Canas. Bethany was doubtless a small place, the name of which fastened itself on the memory of John from its resemblance to Bethany near Jerusalem, from which, in this place, he carefully distinguishes it. Some have placed it near Jericho, others near Scythopolis, south of the Sea of Galilee. Caspari ('Chronolog. Geogr. Introd. to the Life of Christ,' § 70) is very confident that it is identifiable with Tell or Beth-Anibje, on the fords of the Jordan, six miles north of the Sea of Galilee. To the slight resemblance of the names he adds the remark that it is the only possible place on the further shore whence Jesus could have reached Cana of Galilee in one day (cf. ch. i. 44; ii. 1). He maintains that this site throws light on Matt. xix. 1 and ch. x. 40. He is even disposed to read "Bethany" for "Bethsaida" in Mark viii. 22, on the authority of the solitary D and Italic and Gothic Versions. Paulus put a period after ἐγένετο, and then commenced a new sentence with μέγας, and maintained that the Bethany is the well-known Bethany of ch. xi. This, even, is preferable to the suggestion of the Tübingen critics, that the writer invented the place in order to make the ministry of our Lord commence and terminate at the same place. Lieut. Conder, 'Tent-Work,' i. 91;

the sign then given to him, makes it obvious that the baptism and the forty days of the temptation are now in the past. Every day is clearly marked from the day on which the deputation from the Sanhedrin approached him, till we find Jesus at Cana, on his way to Jerusalem. Consequently, the baptism of Christ, which was the occasion of the higher knowledge that John acquired concerning him, as well as the temptation, had been consummated. Of this last it would seem highly probable John had received, in subsequent conversation with the Lord, a full report. The Lord had passed through the fiery ordeal. He had accepted the position of the Servant of the Lord, who, in the way of privation, suffering, fierce antagonism from world, flesh, and devil, would win the crown of victory and prove himself to be the Life and Light of the world. This chronological hint appears to me to explain the sudden and surprising utterance of the next verse.

Ver. 29.—On the following day. Next after the day on which the Sanhedrin had heard from John the vindication of his own right to baptize in virtue of the commencement of the Messiah's ministry, which as yet was concealed from all eyes but his own. He [John] seeth Jesus coming towards him, within reach of observation (certainly not, as Ewald and others have imagined, to be baptized of him, for, as we have seen, the statements of ver. 33 exclude the possibility of such a purpose. The design of Jesus is not stated. The evangelist is here occupied with the testimony of the Baptist to Christ. Enough is said to provide the opportunity for the most wonderful and mysterious utterances of the forerunner. Behold (ἰδοὺ in the singular, although several persons are addressed, is not unusual; see Matt. x. 16 and ch. xi. 3) the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. We should observe, from the later context, that already John had perceived by special signs and Divine inspiration that Jesus was the Son of God, and the veritable Baptizer with the Holy Ghost; that he was before him in dignity, honour, and by pre-existence, although his earthly ministry had been delayed until

ii. 17, 57, has found an *abêrah*, or ford, further north than the traditional place of passage and much nearer to Cana. Bethania may have been the name of a village near such a ford, either there or near Jericho. Such a spot is placed in the map of the Palest. Expl. Soc.

<sup>1</sup> ΒΑΙΝΕΙ (without δ' ἰσχυρῶς) is the reading of S, B, C\*, K, L, etc., and a large number of uncials, and is adopted by Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort, R.T., and Tischendorf.

after John's preparatory work had been done. John had felt that the "confession of sins" made by the guilty multitude, by generations of vipers, was needful, rational, imperative upon them; but that in the case of Jesus this confession was not only superfluous, but a kind of contradiction in terms. The Lord over whom the heavens had opened, and to whom the heavenly name had been given, fulfilling all righteousness by submitting to the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, was a profound perplexity to the Baptist. Strange was it that he who would have power to deal with the Holy Ghost even as John had been using water should have been called in any real sense to confess the sins of his own nature or life. John believed that Jesus was the Source of a fiery purity and purifying power, and that according to his own showing he had rejected all proposals which might bring Israel to his feet by assuming the rôle of their conquering Messiah. He had even treated these suggestions as temptations of the devil. Not to save his physical life from starvation would he use his miraculous energies for his own personal ends. Not to bring the whole Sanhedrin, priesthood, and temple guard, nay, even the Roman governor and court, to his feet, will he utter a word or wave a signal which they could misunderstand. His purpose was to identify himself, Son of God though he be, with the world—to "suffer all, that he might succour all." Because John knew that Jesus was so great he was brought to apprehend the veritable fact and central reality of the Lord's person and work. He saw by a Divine inspiration what Jesus was, and what he was about to do. The simple supposition that Jesus had made John the Baptist his confidant, on his return from the wilderness of temptation and victory, and that we owe the story of the temptation to the facts of Christ's experience which had been communicated to John, do more than any other supposition does to expound the standpoint of John's remarkable exclamation. A library of discussion and exposition has been produced by the words which John uttered on this occasion, and different writers have taken opposite views, which in their origin proceed from the same root. The early Greek interpreters were moving in a true direction when they looked to the celebrated oracle of Isa. liii. as the primary signification of the great phrase, "The Lamb of God." The image used to portray the suffering Sin-bearer is the "Lamb brought silently to the slaughter," "a Sheep dumb before his shearers." Doubtless the first implication of this comparison arose from the prophet's conception of the patience, gentleness, and submission of the sublime but suffering

"Servant of God;" but the fourth, fifth, sixth, and twelfth verses of that chapter are so charged with the sin-bearing of the great Victim, the vicarious and propitiatory virtue of his agony unto death, that we cannot separate the one from the other. He who is led as a Lamb to the slaughter bears our sins and suffers pain for us, is wounded on account of our transgressions: "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all . . . it pleased the Lord to bruise him," etc. The Servant of God is God's Lamb, appointed and consecrated for the highest work of sacrificial suffering and death. The LXX. has certainly used the verb *phérein*, to bear, where John uses *aléin*, to take away. Meyer suggests that in the idea of *aléin* the previous notion of *phérein* is involved and presupposed. The Hebrew formulæ, *נָשָׂא נֶפֶשׁ* and *יָצָא נֶפֶשׁ*, are variously translated by the LXX., but generally in the sense of bearing the consequences of personal guilt or the sin of another (Numb. xiv. 34; Lev. v. 17; xx. 17; Ezek. xviii. 19). In Lev. x. 17 it is distinctly used of the priestly expiation for sin to be effected by Eleazar. Here and elsewhere *נָשָׂא* is translated in the LXX. by *ἀπαρῆναι*, where God as the subject of the verb is described as lifting off sin from the transgressor and by bearing it himself—bearing it away. In several places the LXX. has gone further, translating the word, when God is the subject, by *ἀφαιρῆναι*, with the idea of forgiveness (Ps. xxxii. 5; lxxxv. 3; Gen. i. 17; Isa. xxxiii. 24). Hence the Baptist, in using the word *aléin*, had doubtless in his mind the large connotation of the Hebrew word *נָשָׂא* with the fundamental prerequisite of the taking away, which the oracle of Isaiah had suggested to him. John knew that the taking away of sin involved the twofold process: (1) the conference of a new spiritual life by the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit; and (2) such a removal of the consequences and shame and peril of sin as is involved by the bearing of sins in his own Divine personality. Thus he not only perceived from the accompaniments of the baptism that Jesus was the Son of God and the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, but that, being these, his meek submission and his triumphant repudiation of the temptations of the devil which were based upon the fact of his Divine sonship proved that he was the Divine sin-bearing Lamb of Isaiah's oracle. Many commentators have, however, seen a special reference to the Paschal lamb, with which Christ's work was, without hesitation, compared in later years (1 Cor. v. 7). There can be no doubt that the Passover lamb was a "sin offering" (Hengstenberg, 'Christ of the Old Testament,' vol. iv. 351;

**Baur**, 'Über die Ursprung und Bedeutung des Passah-Fest,' quoted by Lücke, i. 404). It was God's sacrifice by pre-eminence, and the blood of the lamb was offered to God to make atonement, and it freed Israel from the curse that fell on the firstborn of Egypt. John, the son of a sacrificing priest, the Nazarite, the stern prophet of the wilderness, was familiar with all the ritual and the lessons of that solemn festival; and might look on the Son of God, selected for this sacrifice, as fulfilling in singular and unique fashion the function of the Passover Lamb for the whole world. But John would not be limited by the Paschal associations. Day by day lambs were presented before God as burnt offerings, as expressions of the desire of the offerers to accept absolutely the supreme will of God. Moreover, the lamb of the trespass offering was slain for atonement (Lev. iv. 35; xiv. 11; Numb. vi. 12), either when physical defilement excluded the sufferer from temple-worship, or when a Nazarite had lost the advantage of his vow by contact with the dead. Even the ceremonial of the great Day of Atonement, though other animal victims were used, suggested the same great thought of propitiatory suffering and death. These various forms of sacrificial worship must have been in the minds of both Isaiah and John. *They are the key to Isaiah's prophecy, and this in its turn is the basis of the cry of John.* The New Testament apostles and evangelists, whether accurate or not in their exegesis, did repeatedly take this oracle of Isaiah's as descriptive of the work of the Lord, and other early Christian writers treated the chapter as though it were a fragment of their contemporaneous evidence and exposition (Matt. viii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 22—25; Acts viii. 28; Luke xxiii. 37; Rev. v. 6; xiii. 8; Rom. x. 16; Clement, '1 Ep. ad Cor.' xvi.). John was standing further back, and on an Old Testament platform, but we have, in his knowledge of Isaiah's prophecies, and his familiarity with the sacrificial system of which that oracle foreshadowed the fulfilment, quite enough to account for the burning words in which he condensed the meaning of the ancient sacrifices, and saw them all transcended in the suffering Son of God. The author of 'Ecce Homo,' by identifying the "Lamb of God" with the imagery of Ps. xxiii., supposed that John saw, in the inward repose and spiritual joyfulness of Jesus, the power he would wield to take away the sin of the world. "He (John) was one of the dogs of the flock of Jehovah, Jesus was one of the Lambs of the good Shepherd." There is no hint whatever of these ideas in the psalm. This curiosity of exegesis has not secured any acceptance. Some difficulty has been

felt in the fact that John should have made such progress in New Testament thought; but the experience through which John has passed during his contact with Jesus, the sentiment with which he found the Lord whom he sought coming to his baptism, the agony that he foresaw must follow the contact of such a One with the prejudices and sins of the people, above all, the mode in which our Lord was treating the current expectation of Messiah regarding its eagerly desired manifestations as temptations of the devil, flashed the whole of Isaiah's oracle into sudden splendour. He saw the Lamb already led to slaughter, and his blood upon the very door-posts of every house; he saw him lifting, bearing, carrying away, the sin of the world, all impurity, transgression, and shame. His atoning sacrifice is already going on. The sins of mankind fall on the Holy One. He sees him pouring out his soul unto death, and making gentle intercession for his murderers; so in a glorious ecstasy he cries, "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!" (see my 'John the Baptist,' ch. vi. § 2, pp. 369—386).

Ver. 30.—This is he on behalf of whom I said, After me cometh a man (*ἄνθρωπος* is used as a term of higher dignity than *ἄνθρωπος*, and is made more explicit by the positive appearance of the Holy One whom he had just recognized and pointed out to his disciples) who became before me—in human and other activities under the Old Testament covenant—because he was before me; in the deepest sense, having an eternal self-consciousness, a Divine pre-existence, apart from all his dealings and doings with man (see notes on vers. 15, 26, 27). If the shorter reading of vers. 26, 27 be correct, then the occasion on which this great utterance was first made is not described. If it be not expunged from vers. 26, 27, we may imagine that John is now referring to what he said on the previous day to the Sanhedrin. If internal reasons may help to decide a reading, I should be inclined, with Godet as against Meyer, to say that this is the obvious reference. Here, too, the *ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν* is added as explanation of what was enigmatical in ver. 26. The whole saying has already found place in the prologue. The threefold citation reveals the profound impression which the words of the Baptist had made upon his most susceptible disciple.

Vers. 31—34.—(3) *The purpose of John's*

<sup>1</sup> Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T., read *ὅτι* instead of *περὶ*, on the authority of N, B, C, and two quotations of Origen, though there are many authorities for *περὶ* of T.R.



*own mission was to introduce to Israel the Baptist with the Holy Ghost.*

Ver. 31.—And I for my part knew him not. This is thought by some to be incompatible with the statement of Matt. iii. 14, where the Baptist displayed sufficient knowledge of Jesus to have exclaimed, "I have need to be baptized of thee." Early commentators, e.g. Ammonius, quoted in 'Catena Patrum,' suggested that John's long residence in the wilderness had prevented his knowing his kinsman; Chrysostom, 'Hom. xvi. in Joannem,' urged that he was not familiar with his person; Epiphanius, 'Adv. Hæc.,' xxx., and Justin Martyr, 'Dial.,' c. 88, refer to a long passage in the 'Gospel of the Ebionites,' which, notwithstanding numerous perversions, yet suggests a method of conciliation of the two narratives, that the sign of the opening heavens and the voice occasioned the consternation of John, and explains his deprecation of the act which he had already performed (see my 'John the Baptist,' pp. 313, 314; Nicholson, 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' pp. 38—40). Neander has suggested the true explanation: "In contradistinction to that which John now saw in the Divine light, all his previous knowledge appeared to be a non-knowledge." John knew of Jesus, as his kinsman; he knew him as One mightier than himself—One whose coming, as compared with his own, was as the coming of the Lord. When Jesus approached him for baptism, John therefore knew quite enough to make him hesitate to baptize the Christ. He knew more than enough to induce him to say, "I have need to be baptized of thee." Godet imagines that, since baptism was preceded by confession, John found that the confession made by Jesus was of such a lofty, saintly, God-like type of repudiation of sin, as that John himself had never attained to. This representation fails from attributing to John the function of a sacerdotal confessor of later days, and is out of harmony altogether with the meaning and potency of our Lord's confession of the sin of the whole of that human nature which he had taken upon himself. The knowledge which John had of Jesus was as nothing to the blaze of light which burst upon him when he realized the idea that Jesus was the Son of God. The "I knew him not" of this verse was a subsequent reflection of the Baptist when the sublime humility, the dovelike sweetness, and the spiritual might of Jesus were revealed to him. A blind man who had received his sight during the hours of darkness might imagine, when he saw the reflected glory of the moon or morning star in the eye of dawn, that he knew the nature and had felt the glory of light; but amidst the splendours of sunrise or of

noon he might justly say, "I knew it not" (compare the language of Paul, Phil. iii. 10, and of this same evangelist, Rev. i. 17. See Archdeacon Farrar's 'Life of Christ,' vol. i. 117; my 'John the Baptist,' p. 315). But that he should be manifested to Israel, for this cause I came baptizing in (with) water. It was traditionally expected that Elijah should anoint Messiah. John perceives now the transitional nature of his own mission. His baptism retires into the background. He sees that its whole meaning was the introduction of Messiah, the manifestation of the Son of God to Israel. It may be said that the ministry of the wilderness, with the vast impression it produced, is represented by the synoptists as of more essential importance in itself. John's own judgment, however, here recorded, is the true key to the whole representation. The synoptic narrative shows very clearly that, as a matter of fact, the Johannine ministry culminated at the baptism of Jesus, and lost itself in the dawn of the great day which it inaugurated and heralded. The Fourth Gospel does but give the *rationale* of such an arrangement, and refer the origin of the idea to John himself. If John did not *intensify* the sense of sin which Messiah was to soothe and take away; if John did not, by baptism with water, excite a desire for an infinitely nobler and more precious baptism; if John did not prepare a way for One of vastly more moment to mankind and to the kingdom of God than himself,—his whole work was a failure. In that John saw his own relation to the Christ—he saw his own place in the dispensations of Providence.

Vers. 32, 33.—And John bore testimony, saying, I have seen (perfect) the Spirit descending like a dove out of heaven, and it (he) abode upon him. And I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with (in) water, he said to me, Upon whomsoever thou mayest see the Holy Spirit descending, and abiding on him, this (one) is he that baptizeth with (in) the Holy Spirit. The preparation by special teaching for a mysterious vision is the key to the vision itself, which John is here said to have described. There can be no reasonable doubt that the evangelist makes reference to the synoptic tradition of the baptism of Jesus by John, although it may suit some uncompromising opponents of the Fourth Gospel to say that the baptism is here omitted. The act of the rite is not *totidem verbis* described; but the chief accompaniment and real meaning of the baptism is specially portrayed. All the well-known cycles of criticism make their special assault on the narratives at this point. Rationalism finds in a thunderstorm and the casual flight of a pigeon what John magnified into a supernatural portent; Straussianism sees the

growth of a legend from prepared sources of Hebrew tradition, and endeavours to aggravate into irreconcilable discrepancy the various accounts; Baur and Hilgenfeld accentuate the objectively supernatural portent, so as the more easily to put it into the region of ignorant superstition; others find the hint or sign of Gnostic handling; and Keim suggests that it is the poetic colouring which a later age unconsciously attributed to the Baptist and the Christ. Let it be noticed: (1) That the present Gospel does not augment, but diminishes, the miraculous element as compared with the synoptic narrative. The 'Gospel of the Hebrews' added further embellishments still. Our Gospel compels us to believe that the *mind of the Baptist* was the chief region of the miracle. (2) The author of this Gospel might, if he had chosen, have selected his own experience on the Mount of Transfiguration in vindication of a Divine attestation of the Sonship; but he preferred to fall back upon the testimony of his revered master. Peter, James, and John were *unprepared* for what they saw and heard on that occasion; and Peter knew not what he said, so great was the awful wonder that fell upon him then. Here, however, is recorded a vision for which the mind of the great forerunner *was* prepared. He expected to see the Spirit of God in some manner blend his energy with that of the individual who would prove to be the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. (3) John does not discriminate the methods of the two communications, and from this narrative all that could be inferred positively is that the mind of John, by objective or subjective process, of which we know nothing, received the communication and the sacred impression. (4) The synoptic narrative, *primâ facie*, differs from this representation. At all events Luke iii. 21, 22 speaks of "opened heavens," "the Holy Spirit in bodily form as a dove," and a voice addressed to the Lord, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." This account is taken by Strauss as the key to the other three, and he urges that they must all be interpreted in harmony with it. But from the time of Origen, the exegesis of *Matthew's* account no less emphatically states (i.e. if with De Wette, Bleek, Baur, and Keim, we take *ὁ ἁγίους* as the subject of *εἶδεν*) that John *saw* the Holy Spirit descending like a dove and coming upon (Christ) him, and that the voice was addressed to John, "This is my beloved Son," etc. In Mark's account the *εἶδεν* and *αἰδὼν* are susceptible of the same interpretation. It should be observed that Luke's narrative clearly implies that our Lord's baptism took place at some unspecified opportunity, and simply gives the summing up of the impression produced upon the mind of John. It is more reason-

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able to interpret Luke in harmony with the main conception of Matthew and John than to press the latter into forced harmony with the former. (5) The great difficulty is the expression, *σωματικῶς εἶδεν*. But surely the prophetic mind was accustomed to dwell in the midst of similar visual shapes of spiritual things. There was *σωματικὸν εἶδος* enough in the cherubim, olive trees, horses, armies, vials, and cities of the Apocalypse, and there were "voices" heard by Ezekiel, Hosea, Elijah, and by John himself which could be, were, and even must be, described in terms of physical facts, which no interpreters have ever felt compelled to transfer into the region of phenomena. There are still intensely vivid intuitions of spiritual fact which transcend all sensible or logical proof. If John saw and heard these things so far as his own consciousness was concerned, there is enough to account for every peculiarity of the narrative. He saw the Shechinah-glory hovering over the Lord Jesus, officially consecrating a human personality. The *dovelike* (*ὡς περιστέρην*) form and motion taken by the heavenly light reminded him of the brooding of the Spirit of God upon the primal waters. He looked into the face of the Holy One of God—majesty and meekness, Divine glory, human gentleness, a sanctity as of the holy place, a freedom as of the birds of heaven, force like that of the steeds of the rising sun, inward peace like the calm of a brooding dove, transfigured the Lord. This dovelike splendour abode upon him, *passed into him*; and the voice (the invincible conviction, the resistless consciousness that often can find no other expression than "Thus saith the Lord") was heard, "This is my beloved Son," etc. We cannot say what John saw; we know what he said; and it covered the consciousness of the most stupendous reality yet enacted on the earth. That which John had been taught to predict as approaching was now seen to have actually come about. He who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost has commenced his wondrous mission. (6) The whole question as to the relation of the Holy Spirit and the Logos—the relation between the statement of ver. 13 and vers. 31—33—demands special consideration. A few words here may suffice. Baur, Eichhorn, and others have urged that either the *Λόγος* and *Πνεῦμα* are identical, and that that which John means (vers. 1—14) by the *Logos* he afterwards resolves into the *pneuma*, or that this scene and these words are incompatible with the prologue. It is true that Philo and Justin ('Apol.' i. 33) do use the two terms as practically identical. But John has recorded our Lord's own words as to the antithesis of the *πνεῦμα* and *σὰρξ* (ch. iii.), declaring in his prologue that the Logos is the Source of all the life

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and light of men, and that the Logos came into the world and became flesh. Now, if John did not abide firmly in this thought, he would have represented incarnate God as undergoing the process of regeneration at his baptism, than which nothing would be more abhorrent to his entire theory of the Christ. The relations of the Logos and the *Pneuma* to each other and to the Father, metaphysically considered, are profoundly intricate, but the relations of Father, Word, and Holy Spirit to the Person of the Lord Jesus have been several times asserted by the apostles, and cannot be interchanged (see my 'John the Baptist,' lect. v.; Lücke, 'Comm. über d. Evang. Joh.,' vol. i. pp. 433-443).

Ver. 34.—I for my part have seen and have borne testimony that this is the Son of God. The Old Testament standpoint which John occupied enabled him from the first to identify the Messiah with the "Son of God;" but surely this is the record of the first occasion when the Baptist recognized the token that One who sustained such relation with the Father stood before him. There is much in this Gospel and the synoptic narrative to show that the disciples (Matt. xvi. 16, 17) identified the Christ with the Son of God. The tempter and the demons are familiar with the idea (Matt. iv. 1-11; Mark iii. 11; v. 7). The high priest at the trial and the Roman centurion (Matt. xxvi. 63; xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 61), Nathanael (ch. i. 49), Martha (ch. xi. 27), hail him as Son of God. Though the Lord for the most part preferred to speak of himself as "Son of man," yet in this Gospel (ch. v. 19-23; vi. 40; x. 36) he frequently claims this lofty designation. Nor is it confined to this Gospel, for in Matt. xi. 25-27, we have practically the same confession. Now, the declaration of this verse is in intimate connection with what precedes. Neither the Baptist nor the evangelist implies that, by Christ's baptism, and by that which John saw of the descent and abiding of the Spirit upon the Lord, he was there and then constituted "the Son of God." From this misapprehension of the Gospel arose the Gnostic-Ebionite view of the heavenly *Soter* descending on Christ, to depart from him at the Crucifixion. The main significance of the entire paragraph is the special revelation given to John, his consequent illumination and momentous testimony, one that sank into the soul of his most susceptible disciples, and thus made this declaration the "true birth-hour of Christendom" (Ewald, Meyer). The narrative does not imply that Christ's own consciousness of Divine sonship then commenced. He knew who he was when he spoke, at twelve years of age, of "the business of my Father;" but it would

be equally inadequate exegesis to suppose that no communication was then made to the sacred humanity which had been fashioned by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin, and by which he became from the first "the Son of God." The Lord's humanity did become alive to the solemn and awful responsibilities of this public recognition. He knew that the hour was come for his Messianic activity, and the distinct admission of this was the basis of each of the diabolic temptations from which he immediately suffered. There was a unique glory in this sonship which differed from all other usage of the same phrase. Many an Oriental mystic and Egyptian pharaoh and even Roman emperor had thus described themselves; but the Baptist did not speak of himself in this or any other sense as "Son of God." There was flashed into his mind the light of a Divine relationship between Jesus and the Father which convinced him of the pre-existing life of him who was chronologically coming after him. It was probably this momentous utterance which led to the deputation of the Sanhedrin, and induced them to ask for the explanation of a mystery transcending all that John had said from "the day of his showing unto Israel" (see my 'John the Baptist,' lect. vi. § 1). Many commentators here encounter the unquestionable difficulty of John the Baptist's message from the prison. I prefer to discuss it at the close of ch. iii. (see my 'John the Baptist,' lect. vii.; "The Ministry of the Prison"). Here it is sufficient to observe that the vivid intuition and revelation which John obtained touching the deep things of God in Christ, and the vast and far-reaching testimonies which he bore to the Son of God, to the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, the pre-existent glory of him that came after him, and to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," were, nevertheless, in the evangelist's mind historically coincident with the fact that John never did unite himself to the circle of Christ's immediate followers. The "John" of the Fourth Gospel remained in an independent position—friendly, rejoicing in the Bridegroom's voice, but not one of his followers. The preparatory work with which he began his ministry he continued and pursued to the tragic end.

Vers. 35-51.—3. *The first disciples, and their testimony.*

Vers. 35-39.—(1) *John directs his own disciples to Jesus.*

Ver. 35.—On the morrow, again John was standing, and two from his disciples; implying that there were many others within hearing of his voice, or, at least, under his influence. The imperfect tense of the verb *εστῆκει* suggests the idea that he was waiting for some fresh announcement, some provi-

dential event, to determine his course. The "again" refers back to ver. 29. Much must be read between the lines as to these disciples, their excited interest in the words already uttered by their master.

Ver. 36.—And steadfastly regarding (see Mark x. 21, 27; Luke xx. 17; xxii. 61)—with eager and penetrating glance, as though something might be learned from his slightest movements—Jesus as he walked; "walked," not towards John, as on the previous day, but in some opposite direction. This implies that their relative functions were not identical, and not to be confounded. This is the last time when the Baptist and the Christ were together, and the sublime meekness of John, and his surrender of all primary claims to deference, throw light on the unspeakable and gentle dignity of Jesus. He saith, Behold the Lamb of God. The simple phrase, without further exposition, implies that he was recalling to their minds the mighty appellation which he had bestowed upon the Saviour on the previous day, with all the additional interpretation of the term with which it had then been accompanied. The brevity of the cry here marks the emphasis which it bore, and the rich associations it already conveyed. The testimony to the method by which John had, at least in part, arrived at the conclusion is very remarkable. Jesus would not have fulfilled in John's mind the prophetic oracle of the Divine Lamb, or the sacrificial offering for the sin of the world, if steps had not been taken to convince John that he was the veritable Son of God. No mere human nature, but only that humanity which was an incarnation of the Eternal Logos, and filled with the abiding of the Holy Spirit, could be God's Lamb. Cf. here the remarkable fact that it was when the disciples had learned more clearly and grasped more firmly the idea of his Divine sonship that the Lord repeatedly proceeded to explain to them the approach of his sacrificial sufferings and death. As Son of God, he must die for man (Matt. xvi. 21; Luke ix. 22, 43, 44; ch. xvi. 29—32).

Ver. 37.—And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed—became followers of—Jesus. This event, if not profoundly symbolic (as Godet says), is typical of the whole process which has gone on in augmenting rapidly from that day to this. If Jesus were what John said, if they were able on his showing to grasp this much concerning the Lord, they would find in him what John could never be to them. John might awaken the sense of sin, peril, shame, and fear; he had no power to allay it. The lonely Christ has as yet not called one disciple into his fellowship, but as Lamb of God he has power to draw all men to himself. The word now spoken was enough. It divided the bond

which up to this time had united the disciples to John, and made them conspicuous for ever in the group which "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." "*Prima origines ecclesie Christianae*" (Bengel).

Ver. 38.—Then Jesus turned—hearing their footfall, he welcomed their sincere approach, attentive as he ever was to the faintest indication of genuine faith and desire for his best gifts—and beheld them following (*θεαβουαι* is used of intense gaze at that which is august and wonderful, vers. 14, 32; 1 John i. 1; but used also of special and interested contemplation, Matt. vi. 1; ch. vi. 5), and he saith to them, What seek ye? The first words of Jesus, as recorded in this Gospel, reveal the incarnate Logos, anointed of the Holy Spirit, beginning to search the heart and anticipate the unuttered questions of humanity. He assumes their desire for that which he alone can supply. They, on seeing their Christ, the Son of God, all humanly before them, do not fall at his feet, but approach him as a human teacher, and give him the ordinary honorific title of a wise, competent instructor. They said unto him, Rabbi (which is, being interpreted, Teacher). The parenthetical clause reveals the fact that the Gospel was written for Gentile readers. The title "Rabbi" was a modern one, only dating from the days of Hillel, about B.C. 30, and therefore needing interpretation. Where abidest thou? Renan founds on this phrase "Rabbi" the supposition that, when John and Jesus meet, they are both surrounded by groups of followers. The narrative is written to convey a precisely opposite conception. Christ did not refuse this "courtesy title" (Matt. xxiii. 8; ch. xiii. 13), and we can gather nothing else from the narrative. The question itself reveals the mind of the evangelist. In the opinion of all writers (favourable and hostile), the writer, according to a deliberate method adopted by him, wished to imply that he was one of the two disciples who first left the Baptist to attach themselves to Jesus. The very form of the question adds to the probability. It is a characteristic longing of the disciple, whom Jesus loved so well, to be near and with his Master. He craved no laconic phrase, no solitary word, but some more prolonged fellowship, some undisturbed communion and instruction. The varied emotions of that day, moreover, were conspicuously reproduced in the solemn title which the son of Zebedee most persistently applied to his glorified Lord in the Apocalypse. More than thirty times he refers to him as "the Lamb."

Ver. 39.—He saith to them, Come, and ye shall see.<sup>1</sup> "A parable of the message of

<sup>1</sup> The reading *ὁψεσθε* is preferred to that

faith" (Westcott). Some have compared the expression with *ἔρχου καὶ βλέπε*, thrice repeated (T.R.) in Rev. vi.; but it is unnecessary to do so. Faith precedes revelation as well as follows it. They came, and saw where he was abiding. We cannot say where; it may have been some cave in the rocks, some humble shelter amid the hills, some chamber in a caravanserai; for he had not where to lay his head. He called no place his home. And they abode with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. The extreme difficulty of reconciling John's statement as to the time of the Crucifixion with that of Mark (see note on ch. xix. 14) has led very able critics, like Townson, McLellan, Westcott, to argue that all John's notices of time are compatible with his having adopted the Roman method of measuring, *i.e.* from midnight to noon, and from noon to midnight. On that hypothesis the "tenth hour" would be ten a.m., and the two disciples would have remained with our Lord throughout the day. This is not necessarily involved by our present context, and we are not sure that a like supposition will free us from all difficulty in ch. xix. 14. Meyer says that "the Jewish reckoning is involved necessarily in ch. xi. 9; and in ch. iv. 6, 52 it is not excluded." The ordinary New Testament measurement would make the hour four p.m., and on that understanding several hours might still be open for the sacred fellowship. The personal witness shows himself by this delicate hint of exact time, this special note of remembrance concerning the most critical epoch of his life.

Ver. 40—49.—(2) *The naming and convictions of the disciples.*

Ver. 40.—One of the two who heard from John that Jesus was the Son of God and the Lamb of God, and who, on that astounding intelligence, and at their teacher's own suggestion, followed (became henceforth followers of, *ἀκολουθοῖ*) him, was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter (notice a similar construction at ch. vi. 45, where a clause commences with the copula). The other disciple, with the studied reticence ever preserved about his own designation, is left unnamed by the writer. "Simon Peter" is here spoken of as the better-known man. The bestowment of this designation on Andrew shows that the Gospel was written when Peter's greater name was widely recognized, and the reference is made without the faintest touch of depreciation. Simon Peter's reputation gives force and importance to the record of Andrew's faith. The

evangelist's intimate friend Andrew is thus lifted out of his comparative obscurity among the apostolate, not by his association with John, but by his relationship with Simon.

Ver. 41.—(a) *The Messiah. He (Andrew) first*<sup>1</sup> *findeth his own brother Simon.* Dr. Plummer here observes, "In Church history St. Peter is everything, and St. Andrew nothing: but would there have been an Apostle Peter but for Andrew?" Hengstenberg, De Wette, and others have explained the curious word "first," as though both the unnamed disciple and Andrew had gone together to search out Simon, and that Andrew had been the first of the two to be successful. This would leave the *ἴδιον* less satisfactorily accounted for than the simple supposition that each of the disciples started in different directions to find "his own" brother, and that Andrew was more fortunate than his companion. The two pairs of brothers are frequently mentioned as being together. James and John, Andrew and Simon, are partners on the lake of Galilee in their fishing business, and are finally called into full discipleship and apostolate after the visit to Jerusalem (see Mark i. 19, 11). The four are specially mentioned as being together (Mark xiii. 3), so that it is not unreasonable to suggest that when Andrew first sought "his own" brother Simon, John also sought for "his own" brother James. It is worthy of note that the evangelist never mentions his own name, nor that of James, nor that of their mother Salome, although he does imply their presence. Andrew saith to him (Simon), We have found the Messiah—the article is omitted, as *Χριστός* is merely the translation of "Messiah"—(which, adds the evangelist, is, being interpreted, Christ). Andrew is described on two additional occasions as bringing others to Jesus (ch. vi. 8; xii. 22). Here the rapidity and depth of his convictions are noted. The writer's own impression is implied rather than given. He hides his own faith under the bolder and more explicit utterance of his friend. This was the result upon the mind of two disciples of the first conference with Jesus. Marvelous enough that such a thought should have possessed them, however imperfect their ideas were as yet concerning the Christ! The *εὐρήκαμεν* implies that they had long been waiting for the Consolation of Israel, looking for his coming, seeking his appearing. "We have sought," they say, "and we have found." A more wonderful *Εὐρηκα* than that of Archi-

of *ἴδεν* of T.R. and Lachmann, by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T., Westcott and Hort, on the authority of B\*, A, B, M, L, and quotations from Origen and numerous cursives.

<sup>1</sup> The awkward reading *πρῶτον* is preferred to *πῶτος* of T.R. by Lachmann, Tregelles, R.T., and Westcott and Hort, on the authority of B\*, A, B, M, L, 22, 69, etc.; but not by Meyer, Godet, or Tischendorf (8th edit.).

medes. The plural does not necessitate the presence of John, though it does suggest the agreement of Andrew and his friend in the same august conclusion. What sense of Divine things must have come from the words and looks of Jesus! He who produced such impression on the Baptist as that which the four evangelists report, had done even more with the susceptible spirits of his two disciples. The Baptist never actually called Jesus "the Christ." But when he had testified to the pre-existing glory, the heavenly origin, the sublime functions of the great *ἐρχόμενος*, and by special revelation on his forewarned spirit had declared that he was the Son of God, the Lamb of God, and the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and fire: what must not the inference be when his two disciples came into yet closer and more intimate relations with Jesus? The Jewish idea of "Messiah" (*Messias*, only occurring here and ch. iv. 25), equivalent to מָשִׁיחַ, Aramaized form, the *stat. emphat.* of מָשִׁיחַ (Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ); cf. *ʿissal* for *ʿis* (Kautzsch, 'Gram. des Bib. Aram.,' p. 10), was the term used among all classes to denote One who should, as anointed by God, fulfil the functions of Prophet, Priest and King, who should realize the splendid visions of the ancient prophecies, and combine in himself a wonderful exhibition of Divine majesty and even of awful suffering. We see that the Baptist understood what was meant by the title, but denied its applicability to himself. The Samaritans believe in a coming Prophet and Saviour (ch. iv. 25, 29). The people believe that Messiah will work miracles, that he will be born in Bethlehem, that he will abide for ever, that he would prove to be the Son of God. The King Messiah is a pre-existing power and presence in their past history. He will come in the clouds, and reign for ever and ever (see ch. vii. 26, 31 and 42; xii. 34). According to Wünsche ('Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Ev., aus Talmud und Midrasch,' pp. 499, 500), the Talmud ('Pesachim,' 54, and 'Nedavim,' 39) declares that Messiah, or his Name, was one of the seven things created before the world; and Midrasch ('Schemoth,' par. 19) on Exod. iv. 22 declares that the King Messiah was the Firstborn of God. The more spiritual ideas of John the Baptist have prepared the two disciples to see, even in the travel-stained, lowly Man, "the Messiah." Of course, their idea of Messiah and their idea of Jesus would suffer wonderful development, and be harmonized and blended into a sublime unity by later instructions; but they had made this great discovery, and hastened to impart it.

Ver. 42.—*He* brought (the past tense)

<sup>1</sup> The *καὶ* is omitted before *ἤγαγεν* by

him to Jesus; as one entirely sympathetic and as eagerly longing for the Christ, for the Lamb of God, for the King of Israel. Seeing that Simon was found so soon—most probably on the evening of the memorable day—we gather that Simon also must have been among the hearers of John. He too must have left his fishing to listen to the Baptist. The entire group must have been drawn away from their ordinary avocations by the trumpet-call of the preacher in the wilderness. Jesus looked—intently, with penetrating glance—upon him, and said, Thou art Simon, the Son of John<sup>1</sup>—that is the name by which thou hast been introduced to me; a time is coming for thee to receive a new name—Thou shalt be called Cephas<sup>2</sup> (which is interpreted, Peter). It is perfectly gratuitous of Baur and Hilgenfeld to imagine this to be a fictitious adaptation of the great scene recorded in Matt. xvi. The solemn assertions made there proceed upon the assumption of the previous conference of the name "Peter." There the Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock," etc. On this earlier occasion Jesus said, "Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Κηφᾶς." The assumption of the Tübingen critics, that a desire to lower Peter from his primacy is conspicuous in this passage, cannot be sustained. Though Andrew and John precede Peter in their earliest relations with Jesus, yet Peter is undoubtedly the most conspicuous character, to whom the Lord from the first gives an honourable cognomen (cf. also ch. vi. 67—69 and xxi. 15, etc.). (Compare here, for historic changes of name, Gen. xvii. 5; xxxii. 28.) Weiss ('Life of Christ,' Eng. trans., i. 370) says admirably, "There is no ground for assuming that this is an anticipation of Matt. xvi. 18. Simon was not to bear this name until he was deserving of it. Jesus never called him anything but Simon (Mark xiv. 37; Matt. xvii. 25; Luke xxii. 31; ch. xxi. 15—17). Paul calls him by the names Peter and Cephas. . . . The evangelist is right when he beholds in this scene a more than human acumen.

§, B, L, and other authorities, Tregelles. Tischendorf (8th edit.), though Lachmann preserved it with A, X, Γ, Δ, etc. The omission gives some additional dramatic force to the narrative.

<sup>1</sup> *Ἰωάννου* ("John") must replace the familiar *Ἰωάν* ("Jonah") here and ch. xxi., on the authority of §, B\*, L, 33. So Tregelles Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort. R.T. *Ἰωάν*, is read by A, B\*, X, Γ, Δ, and other uncials and versions. Lachmann, Tregelles, and Bala Revisers all place *Ἰωάν* in the margin.

<sup>2</sup> *πέτρα*, equivalent to Κηφᾶς, an *emphat. stat.* to *πέτρα*, a rock (Kautzsch).

... The history shows he was not deceived in Peter." This narrative cannot be a Johannine setting forth of the first call of the four disciples as given in the synoptists. If it be, it is a fictitious modification. Place, occasion, and immediate result are all profoundly different. The one narrative cannot be twisted into the other. Are the anti-harmonists correct in saying that they are irreconcilable? Certainly not. There is no indication that before John was cast into prison, before Jesus commenced his public ministry in Galilee, he had called disciples away from their ordinary duties to be his apostles. Some of these four may have returned, as Jesus himself did, to his family and domestic surroundings (ch. ii. 12). John may have accompanied Jesus to Jerusalem and through Samaria. But there is much to make it probable that Simon, Andrew, and James, at least, were, during the whole of that period, on the lake pondering the future. Christ's solemn, sudden call to them to become "fishers of men," after a manifestation to them of his supernatural powers, presupposes rather than excludes this earlier interview. Simon, on that occasion, by the exclamation recorded (Luke v. 5), reveals an earlier acquaintance with and reverence for his *ἐπιστάτης* (see an admirable vindication of this position in Weiss, 'Life of Jesus,' vol. I.). The Lord, in this first interview, penetrates and denominates the character of the most illustrious of his followers. His rocklike fortitude, which, though sorely assailed and chafed by the storms of the great sea of opinion and prejudice, formed the central nucleus of that Church against which the gates of hell have not prevailed. Our Lord implied the strength of his nature, even when he predicted his great fall (Luke xxii. 32).

Vers. 43, 44.—On the morrow—i.e. on the fourth day after the deputation from the Sanhedrin—he willed—or was minded—to go forth into Galilee, to commence his homeward journey. Whether this implies an actual beginning of his route, or suggests, before any step was taken in that direction, that the following incidents occurred, cannot be determined, though commentators take opposite sides, as though something important depended upon it. The former supposition is, however, in keeping with the considerable distance, on any hypothesis of the site of Bethany, between it and Cana. And he (the Lord himself "finds;" the two earliest disciples had sought and found him) findeth Philip; very probably on the route from the scene of John's baptism to the Bethsaida on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee. And Jesus saith to him, Follow me; become one of my *ἀκόλουθοι*. The arguments, the reasons, which weighed with him are not

given at first, but we find that he soon learned the same great lesson as that which the other disciples had acquired, and he clothes them in memorable words. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. This is a remark of the evangelist, who did not consider it necessary to say from what city or neighbourhood he had himself issued. This town has utterly perished (Matt. xi. 20), although some travellers (Robinson, iii. 359; Wilson and Warren) believe that indications were found north of *Khan Mīnyeh*, and others have identified it with *Tell-Hām*. Some writers ('Picturesque Palestine,' vol. ii. 74, 81, etc.) discover it in *Ain et Tābighah*, where some remains of a fountain-reservoir and other buildings are found. It was identified by Thomson with *Abu-Zany*, on the west of the entrance of Jordan into the lake. The two pairs of brothers must have been familiar with Philip. Some interesting hints of character are attainable from ch. vi. 5, in which an incident occurs where Philip revealed a practical wisdom and confident purpose, and again in ch. xii. 21, 22, where Andrew and Philip are made the confidants of the Greeks, and Philip is the one who seems able and willing to introduce them to Jesus. In ch. xiv. 8 Philip uttered one of the great longings of the human heart—a passionate desire to solve all mysteries, by the vision of the Father; but he lets out the fact that he had not seen all that he might have seen and known in Jesus himself. Subsequent history shows that Philip was one of the "great lights of Asia," and was held in the highest esteem (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' iii. 31). He must not be confounded with Philip the evangelist, whose daughters prophesied (Acts viii. ; xxi. 8).

Ver. 45.—Further convictions of the disciples. (b) *The theme of the Old Testament.* Philip findeth Nathanael. He has no sooner accepted the Lord who found him, than he is eager to communicate the Divine secret to others. It seems widely accepted, though without any positive proof, that this Nathanael was identical with the Bartholomew (Bar Tolmai, son of Ptolemy) of the four lists of apostles, on the following grounds: (1) In ch. xxi. 2 Nathanael once more appears among the innermost circle of the apostles, and is moreover mentioned there in company with Thomas. In the synoptic Gospels Bartholomew is associated also with Philip, although in Acts, Luke ranks him with Matthew. (2) It is probable that Nathanael was one of the twelve, and, this being so, it is more probable that he should have been identical with Bartholomew than with any other. He is distinguished from Thomas and the two sons of Zebedee in ch. xxi. 2, and the whole circumstance of his call sug-

gests no resemblance to that of Matthew.

(3) His well-known name is only that of a patronymic, and suggests the existence of another and a personal name. This identification cannot be proved, but there is no other that is more probable. Nathanael (נחנאי), as a name in Hebrew, is identical with Theodorus, "God is giver" (Numb. i. 8; 1 Chron. ii. 14; see also 1 Esdras i. 9; ix. 22). Thoma ('Die Genesis des Johannes-Evangeliums,' p. 409, etc.) endeavours to identify Nathanael with Matthew, and to institute a series of ingenious comparisons between the synoptic "Matthew and Zaccheus" and this Israelite without guile, and to compare the marriage-feast at Nathanael's "Cana" with the feast in Matthew's, or Levi's, house. The subtle fancy and dramatic moral which he attributes to every clause of the narrative render the authorship a greater puzzle than ever. Philip saith unto him, *We have found—we*, the group of friends already illumined with the sublime hope—him of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets, wrote. This reveals the characteristics of the conversation which had passed between the Lord and the favoured three. It corresponds with what occurred on the way to Emmaus. The Lord rested upon the germinant ideas, and prophetic hopes, suggestive types, and positive predictions of the Old Testament, and met, while he refined and elevated, the current expectations of his time. There was to be no break with the old covenant, except by fulfilling it, establishing its reality and its vast place in the revelation of the supreme will of God. The question naturally arises, "Well, but who is he? what is his name? whither has he come? whence does he hail?" The continuation of the sentence is obviously not in apposition with the *ὁ ἐγγράψεν*, but the direct object of *εὐφράμεν*. We have found Jesus the 'Son of Joseph of Nazareth.' This is the simple utterance of a matter of fact—a current piece of intelligence now circulating in the group of the earliest disciples. The idea of his being Joseph's Son was widely diffused; the fact that the Lord spent the first thirty years of his human life in Nazareth, was a commonplace of the synoptic story. The argument of the Tübingen and Straussian criticism, that the fourth evangelist was ignorant of Christ's birth from above, is contradicted by the prologue, with all the assertions of the Lord's pre-existence, and especially by ver. 14 with ch. iii. 6, and 13. That he was ignorant of the birth in Bethlehem, with the numberless proofs of his knowledge of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, is absurd. The language

put into Philip's lips does not exhaust the knowledge of the evangelist on this subject (cf. ch. vii. 42).

Vers. 46—49.—(c) *The Son of God and King of Israel.*

Ver. 46.—And Nathanael said to him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? The ordinary interpretations of the meaning of this question are not satisfactory. (1) The prejudice against Nazareth as being a Galilean town cannot have weighed with Nathanael of Cana in Galilee (ch. xxi. 2), even though he may have shared the ignorant opinion that "out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (ch. vii. 52). He might have known that Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, probably Elijah, Elisha, and Amos, were Galileans. (2) That Nazareth was a secluded and contemptible village seems disproved by the interesting papers of Dr. Selah Merrill, on "Galilee in the Time of our Lord," *Amer. Bibl. Sacra.*, January and April, 1874. (3) That the character of its people should have been jealous, turbulent, capricious, and led to our Lord's subsequent preference for Capernaum, does not explain the force of the inquiry. The "good thing" may, however, be the contrast between the unimportance of the place in the political or religious history of the people, as compared with Jerusalem, Tiberias, Jericho, Bethlehem. It is never mentioned in the Old Testament or in Josephus. Nathanael may have known its mediocrity, and have been startled by the possibility of a carpenter's son, in a spot utterly undistinguished, being the Messiah of whom their sacred writers spoke. "Despised Nazareth" is a phrase rather due to the splendour of the flower that grew upon its barren soil, and became contrasted afterwards with the unlooked-for glory and claims of the Nazarene. Philip saith unto him, Come and see. This was his strongest argument. To look upon him is to believe. He had much more to learn in after-days (ch. xiv. 8, 9). At this moment he and Nathanael stood on ground consecrated by ancient history, and thrilling with the thunder-peals of the Baptist, mazed and wistful from much longing, thinking of the union between heaven and earth which had been revealed in the experience of ancient prophets, dwelling on the careers of Israel, Moses, and Elijah in their rapt transports, musing under fig trees or the like, and longing for the great King. He may naturally have reasoned on this wise: "Can it be true that the Christ, the King of Israel, the Lord of the temple, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, is indistinguishable from the rest of mankind in this very crowd? Would that I too might see in him, as John has done, some vision of the opened heaven, that I too might hear some unmistakable

<sup>1</sup> Alford preserves the *τὸν* with T.B.; Trægelles brackets; other modern editors exclude it.



voice!" If these were the musings of Nathanael—and surely there is not a trace of unreason in such meditations in the breast of a disciple of the Baptist—the conversation which follows is more easy to understand.

Ver. 47.—Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him—for Nathanael at once obeyed the summons of Philip—and saith of him; not, to him—saith in the hearing of the unnamed disciple, who could not leave his Master's side. There are numerous indications in ch. i. and ii. of a qualification of Jesus which, in ch. ii. 25, is described as knowing what was in man. He read the thought and character of Simon and Philip, of Nathanael, and of his mother; and here he makes use of his Divine prerogative and, as on a multitude of other occasions, penetrated the surface to the inner motive and heart. Behold, an Israelite indeed; one who fulfils the true idea of Israel, a prince with God, a conqueror of God by prayer, and conqueror of man by submission, penitence, and restitution; one who has renounced the spirit of supplanter and taken that of penitent. "Confident in self-despair," he has relinquished his own strength, and lays hold of the strength of God, and is at peace. In whom is no guile; *i.e.* no self-deception, and no disposition to deceive others. The (Ps. xxxiii. 1, 2) description of the blessedness of "the man whose transgressions are forgiven, . . . and in whose spirit [LXX., 'mouth'] there is no guile (*δύλος*)," is the finest key to the significance of this passage. Christ does not say that this man is *sinless*, but guileless—free and full in his confession, knowing himself, and sheltering himself under no devices or seeming shows. The publican (it has been well said) was without guile when he cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" The Pharisee was steeped in self-deception and guile when he said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." Sincerity, openness of eye, simplicity of speech, no wish to appear other than what he is before God and man, affirms his guilelessness. Alas! the so-called Israelite has widely departed from the fundamental idea of such a character, though not more so than Christians have become unlike the ideal disciples of Jesus.

Ver. 48.—Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Without any title of respect, or admission as yet of any claims or right in him of whom Philip had spoken. There is, in this query, an abruptness of blunt sincerity which to some extent justifies the eulogium upon his innermost life. Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee—irrespective altogether of the excitement he has stirred within thee—when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. "The fig tree" was the

type of the Israelite home (1 Kings iv. 25; Zech. iii. 10). There, not in the corners of the street, was he accustomed to meditate and pray. The *ὅρα* clause is in apposition with *σε*, and (though another translation is grammatical) suggests that Christ saw him under conditions which had nothing whatever to do with those under which Philip called him. *Εἶδόν* is used for the most part of simple *sight*, and need not necessarily connote miraculous penetration and recognition of all that was passing in his mind. And yet the obvious intention of the evangelist is to convey more than casual observation. As Weiss says, "What is mentioned is not one isolated glance into the depths of the soul, but past events, along with their outward circumstances, are known to Jesus." "I saw thee"—I have not been ignorant of thee; I watched and thought of thee. The astonishing effect produced by this saying of the Lord has been variously conceived. Some have surmised preternatural optical powers exercised from a distance; others a simple observation without comment at the time when our Lord watched him in one of the places of retirement sacred to solemn meditations and instructions. It seems to me that the occasion to which our Lord referred must have been one of extreme spiritual interest and memorableness to Nathanael; some hour had passed of commanding influence upon his mind—one of those periods of visitation from the living God, when lives are recommenced, when an old world passes away and a new one has been made, of which the lips have never spoken, and which are among the deepest secrets of the soul. It was the conviction that his secret meditation had been surprised, that the unknown Stranger had fathomed the depth of his consciousness, which wrought and wrung the great confession of which we have here a crisp outline. *I saw thee*; and by this implication I can sympathize in all thy longings. [It is interesting to remember that Rabbi Akiba is described as studying the Law under a fig tree; and Augustine heard the voice which ruled his subsequent life "under a fig tree" ('Conf.' viii. 12, 28); and Buddha's most wonderful convictions and resolves occurred under the *bô* tree.]

Ver. 49.—Nathanael was overcome by irresistible conviction that here was the Searcher of hearts, One gifted with strange powers of sympathy, and with right to claim obedience. Answered him<sup>1</sup>—now for the

<sup>1</sup> The omission of the *καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ* is made by Westcott and Hort, R.T., Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, etc., on the authority of B, L, 33. The omitted clause is given differently in N, A, and other uncials.

first time with the title of *Rabbi*, or teacher—Thou art the Son of God. Nothing is more obvious than that this is the reflection of the testimony of the Baptist. "The Son of God," not "a Son of God," or "a Man of God," but the Personage whose rank and glory my master John had recognized. He may have doubted before whether the Baptist had not gone wild with hallucination, and could have meant what he said. Now the reality has flashed upon his mind from the glance of the Saviour's eye and the tones of his voice (see notes on ver. 34). The great term could not have meant to him what it does now to the Church. Still the truth involved in his words is of priceless significance. Luthardt says, "Nathanael's faith will never possess *more* than it embraces at this moment." Godet adds, "The gold-seeker puts his hand on an ingot; when he has coined it, he has it better, but not more." The idea of the Divine sonship comes from the Old Testament prophecy, has its root in Ps. ii. and lxxii., and in all the strange wonderful literature which recognized in the ideal King upon Zion and upon David's throne One who for evermore has stood and will stand in personal relations with the Father. The Divine sonship is the basis on which Nathanael rears his further faith that he is the King of Israel. He is Messiah-King, because he is "Son of God." The true Israelite recognizes his King (cf. Luke i. 32; Matt. ii. 2; ch. xii. 13). We are not bound to believe that Nathanael saw all that Peter subsequently confessed to be the unanimous conviction of the twelve (ch. vi. 69; Matt. xvi. 16); but the various symphonies of this great confession encompass the Lord from his cradle to the cross. The synoptic narrative is as expressive and convincing as the Johannine.

Vers. 50, 51.—(d) *The Son of man, the link between heaven and earth.*

Ver. 50.—Jesus answered and said to him, Because I said unto thee, that I saw thee underneath the fig tree, thou believest. There is no need to transform this into a question, as though Jesus smiled a gentle reproof upon the rapidity with which Nathanael espoused his cause (cf. ch. xvi. 31; xx. 29). The Lord, on the contrary, congratulates him upon the sincerity with which he had at once admitted claims which had never been more explicitly expressed. Thou hast believed because I have made thee feel that I have sounded the depths of thy heart, by means which pass understanding. There are profounder abysses than the human heart. There are powers at my disposal calculated to create a more tender and inspiring faith, one which shall carry thee into other worlds as well as through this. Thou shalt see

greater things than these. There shall be vouchsafed a fuller, clearer revelation of what I am, which shall pour new and deeper meaning into the confession thou hast made. Hitherto the Lord was speaking to the one man; but now he says what would be applicable, not only to Nathanael, but to all who had found him, and accepted that outline of his functions and claims which had formed the substance of the latest teaching of John the Baptist.

Ver. 51.—And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you. The reduplicated *Ἀμήν* occurs twenty-five times in John's Gospel, and is in this form peculiar to the Gospel, although in its single form it occurs fifty times in the three synoptists. The word is, strictly speaking, an adjective, meaning "firm," "trustworthy," corresponding with the substantive *ᾠκνῆ*, truth, and *ῥῆσῆς* and *ῥῆμα*, confidence, the covenant (Neh. x. 1). The repetition of the word in an adverbial sense is found in Numb. v. 22 and Neh. viii. 6. In Rev. iii. 14 "Amen" is the name given to the Faithful Witness. The repetition of the word involves a powerful asseveration, made to overcome a rising doubt and meet a possible objection. The "I say unto you" takes, on the lips of Jesus, the place which "Thus saith the Lord" occupied on those of the ancient prophets. He speaks in the fullness of conscious authority, with the certain knowledge that he is therein making Divine revelation. He knows that he saith true; his word is truth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, [From<sup>1</sup> henceforth] ye shall see the heaven that has been opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. Notwithstanding the formidable superficial difficulty in the common reading, which declares that from the moment when the Lord spake, Nathanael should see what there is no other record that he ever literally saw; yet a deeper pondering of the passage shows the sublime spiritual sense in which those disciples who fully realized that they had been brought into blessed relationship with the "Son of man," saw also—that heaven, the abode of blessedness and righteousness, the throne of God, had been opened behind him and around him. The dream of Jacob is mani-

<sup>1</sup> 'An' ἄρτι is now rejected by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, R.T., on the authority of N, B, L, and several versions, quotations from Origen, Euphrasianus, Cyril, although all the secondary uncials and numerous quotations can be cited for it. The argument for its retention is its difficulty, and also the fact that it could scarcely have been added by a copyist.

feastly referred to—the union between heaven and earth, between God and man, which dawned like a vision of a better time upon the old patriarchal life. That which was the dream of a troubled night may now be the constant experience of the disciples of the Lord. The ascension of the angelic ministers is here said to precede their descent. This is due to the original form of the dream of Jacob, but must be supplemented by the Lord's own statement (ch. iii. 13), "No one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven." The free access to the heart of the Father, and to the centre of all authority in heaven and earth, is due only to those who have come already thence, who belong to him, "who go and return as the appearance of a flash of lightning." They ascend with the desires of the Son of man; they descend with all the faculty needed for the fulfilment of those desires. He, "the Son of man," is now on earth to commence his ministry of reconciliation, and is thus now equipped with all the powers needed for its realization. The same truth is taught by our Lord, when he said (cf. notes on ch. iii. 13) that "the Son of man is in heaven," even when he walked the earth. The angelic ministry attendant upon our Lord is so inconspicuous that it does not fulfil the notable description of this verse, nor fill out its suggestions. The miraculous energies, the Divine revelations, the consummate heavenliness of his life, the power which his personality supplied to see and believe in heaven—in heaven opened, heaven near, heaven accessible, heaven propitious, heaven lavish of love—answers to the meaning of the mighty words. Thoma ('Die Genesis des Johannes-Evan.') sees the Johannine interpretation of the angels who ministered to Jesus after the conclusion of his temptation. But why does he call himself "the Son of man," in sharp response to, or in comment on, the ascription by John the Baptist and Nathanael of the greater title "Son of God" (see Matt. viii. 20; Mark ii. 28)? (1) The phrase is one that our Lord currently used for himself, as especially descriptive of his position. It has been said that its origin must be looked for in the prophecies of Daniel (vii. 13), where angelic powers are seen in loving lowly attendance on "one like to the Son of man," one whose human-hearted force contrasts with the "beast forces," the uncouth, sphynx-like blending of animal faculties which characterizes all the kingdoms and dynasties which the empire of the one like the Son of man would supersede. The term, "Son of man," is used repeatedly by Ezekiel for humanity set over against the Divine voice and power. There it corresponds with the Aramaic 'Bar-Enosh,' Son of man—a

simple paraphrasis for "man" in his weakness, and often in his depression and sin. The 'Book of Enoch,' in numerous places, identifies "Son of man" with the Messiah (ch. xlvi. and xlviii.), but it cannot be clearly proved that the term was *popularly* current for the Messiah. Christ seems, in one place, to discriminate the two terms in popular expectation (Matt. xvi. 13, 16); and in Matt. viii. 20 he discriminates his earthly ministry as that of Son of man, from the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, though the dispensation of his human life, and of his eternal Spirit, constitute that of the one Christ. (2) Another very remarkable fact is that, though Jesus calls himself "the Son of man" no fewer than seventy times, the apostles never attribute the favourite expression to him. The only instances of its use by other than the Lord himself, is by the dying Stephen, who thus describes his power and exalted majesty (Acts vii. 56), and John in the Apocalypse, who says the vision of the Lord was of one like unto the Son of man—a phrase clearly built upon the passage in Dan. vii. (3) The Saviour did not throughout the Gospel of John proclaim himself openly to the people as the Christ, avoiding a term which was so miserably degraded from his own conception of it; but he used a multitude of expressions to denote the spiritual force and significance of the Messianic dignity. Thus he described himself "as he that came down from heaven;" as the "Bread of heaven;" as the "Light of the world;" as "the good Shepherd;" "I am he;" "that which I said from the beginning," etc.; and therefore, when he adopted the phrase, "the Son of man," he attributed to it very special powers and dignities. The word seems to involve the Man, the perfect Man, the ideal Man, the second Adam, the supreme Flower engrafted on the barren stock of humanity, the Representative of the whole of human-kind. Chronologically, this must have been the primary revelation. Through humanity that was archetypal and perfect, answering God's idea of man, the thought of the race has risen to a conception of Divine sonship. But metaphysically, logically, he could only fulfil the functions of Son of man, of *the Man*, because he was essentially the Son of God. (4) The dominant thought of the term has fluctuated between that which connotes his earthly ministry and humiliation, and lays stress on the privations and sufferings of the Son of man, and that which recites his highest claim to reverence and homage. Seeing that he claims to be the link between heaven and earth, Judge of quick and dead, the Head of the kingdom of God, who will come in his glory, with his holy angels, to divide sheep from goats, etc., as *Son of man*; and

seeing that, as Son of man, he gave himself for a ransom, and was as one that serveth, and presented his flesh and blood as the spiritual food of all that live;—the synthetic thought that issues from the twofold survey is that his highest glory is based upon his entire and utter sympathy with man. His humanity is that which gives him all his hold upon our heart; his sacrifice is his title to universal sovereignty. "He humbled himself to the death of the cross, wherefore God also has highly exalted him, giving even to him [humanity included] THE NAME that is above every name." Archdeacon Watkins, *in loco*, has called attention to the fact that it is not *άνηρ*, but *άνθρωπος*, "man as man, not Jew as holier than Greek, not freeman as nobler than bondman, not man as distinct from woman, but humanity. . . . The ladder from earth to heaven is in the truth, 'The Word was made flesh.' In that great truth heaven was and has re-

mained open." The cries of earth, the answers of heaven, are like angels evermore ascending and descending on the Word-made-flesh. It is perfectly true, though in a different sense than that which Thoma adopts it, that this prehistory (*vorgeschichte*) is the *vorgeschichte* of Christendom, as of each soul becoming Christian, the different eventualities which lead from one revelation to another betoken the several stations on the blessed pilgrimage (*heilsweg*). (Cf. Introduction; the excursions of Godet; Westcott on 'The Son of Man;' Orme's dissertation on 'Sin against the Holy Ghost;' Schaff's note to Lange, on John, *in loco*; Schmidt, 'Bibl. Theol. N. T.,' pp. 107, etc.; Weiss, 'Bibl. Theol. N. T.,' § 144; Liddon, 'Divinity of Our Lord,' lect. i.; Pearson on the Creed, Oxford edit., p. 122; Andrew Jukes, 'The New Man,' lect. ii.: "The Openings of Heaven in the Experience of Christ and of Christians.")

## HOMILETICS.

**Vers. 1, 2.—Prologue of the Gospel.** The prologue is in harmony with the design of a biographic history which is to set forth Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The Fourth Gospel is thus a distinct advance, dogmatically, upon the other Gospels, for Matthew exhibits him in his Messianic royalty; Mark, as the Son of man and the Servant of God; Luke, as the Son of man and Saviour of the race of man, without distinction of Jew or Gentile. The Apostle John exhibits him in the glorious activity of his Divine nature.

**I. THE SUBJECT OF THE PROLOGUE.** "The Word." Jesus Christ is the Word as he is the essential Revealer of the Divine Being. "There is in the Divine Essence a principle by which God reveals himself—the Logos; and a principle by which he communicates himself—the Spirit." Christ is "the express Image of the Father's Person" (Heb. i. 3), just as a word is an image or picture of a thought. But he is also the Interpreter of the Divine will. "The only begotten Son hath declared the Father" (ch. i. 18), through Creation, through prophets, through the Incarnation. He was called the Word. 1. *Not as man*; for as man he was not in the beginning with God, neither was he Creator. 2. *He was the Word before he was man*; for it was as the Word he became flesh (ver. 14). 3. *He was the Word as he was the Son of God*—"the only begotten Son of the Father." 4. *Yet he is called here the Word rather than the Son of God*, because the Jews were familiar with this name as applied to the Messiah, and, as has been suggested, the apostle would not at first alienate their hearts by the title "Son of God," which was so offensive to the unbelieving Jews (ch. x. 30, 33).

**II. THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE WORD.** 1. *He is an absolute Eternal Being.* "In the beginning was the Word." (1) The beginning carries us back to the initial point of time. As the "beginning" of the Book of Genesis starts from that point, dating Creation from it, the apostle carries us still further back, even beyond "the beginning." (2) The Word existed in the beginning. The word "was" suggests a continuous state. The Word was therefore in existence before time and before Creation. It was "before all things." It was from all eternity. Jesus spoke of the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was" (ch. xvii. 5). (3) This passage condemns alike the Socinian and the Arian theories; for it asserts, against the first, that Christ had an existence before his birth at Bethlehem; and, against the second, that he existed before the highest angels, who are created beings, for he "was," not "he was created." Basil says, "These two terms, 'beginning' and 'was,' are like two anchors," which the ship of a man's soul may safely ride at, whatever storms of heresy may come. There never, therefore, was a time when Christ was not. 2. *He is a distinct Person from God, yet*

one with him. "And the Word was with God." Coleridge remarks upon the significance of the preposition (*πρὸς*) as implying that the Word was "with God," not in the sense of coexistence, or local proximity, or communion, but of mysterious relation with God. The preposition implies that the Word was with God, before he revealed God. The distinct personality of the Son is asserted against the error of the Sabellians, who held that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are but three Names of one Person. The "life eternal" was not only "manifested to men," but it was "with the Father" (1 John i. 2). Not with God, as if to emphasize the distinction of Persons in the Godhead; not with men or angels, for they were yet to be created; but with the Father in eternal glory. "It was he," says Pearson, "to whom the Father said, 'Let us make man in our image.'" We have no mental capacity to explain the oneness of essence, any more than the distinctness of Persons, in the Godhead. The apostle does not say that "God was with God," but that the "Word was with God." We therefore receive believingly the words of our Lord himself, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me;" "I and the Father are one;" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," as different expressions of the same Divine truth. 3. *He is God.* "And the Word was God." The passage asserts the Divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord in the plainest terms. It places him within the unity of the Godhead. The Son is, therefore, not inferior to the Father. The text refutes the Arians, who say he is a super-angelic Being inferior to God; the Socinians, who say he is only Man; and the Sabellians, who deny any distinction of Persons in the Trinity. 4. *The doctrine of the Trinity is a deep mystery, but it is fundamental in Christianity.* Therefore the apostle reiterates the eternity, the personality, the oneness of the Word with God. "The same was in the beginning with God." Some person might say there was a time when the Word was not a distinct Person in the Trinity. The statement is made that the same Person, who was eternal and Divine, was from eternity a distinct Person of the Godhead. Well may we say with Bernard, "It is rashness to search too far into it. It is piety to believe it. It is life eternal to know it!"

Vers. 3—5.—*Jesus Christ in relation to creation.* The apostle next shows the relation between the finite and the infinite, the Divine and the human.

I. **THE WORD MADE FLESH.** "All things were made by him." Therefore he must be God. "He that built all things is God" (Heb. iii. 4). This creation has a double aspect. 1. *He made the worlds.* He made matter. (1) Therefore it is implied that matter exists. The existence of an external world has always been an article in the creed of men. (2) It has not existed always, as the Gnostics and so many philosophers say. Its atoms have all the character of "a manufactured article." Science can tell us nothing of the time of its creation. (3) There is a Person great enough to create matter and form the worlds. He did not share, with angels, in the work of creation; for "without him was not anything made that was made." Neither was the world made by evil spirits, as the Gnostics said. (4) This is not, therefore, a fatherless world. (5) The ultimate fact, therefore, is not force, or any unknown power, but a Person, wise and mighty, who created all things. (6) Let Christians rejoice that the worlds are the handiwork of their Elder Brother. 2. *He made man, who is the crown of creation; for "in him was life."*

II. **THE WORD IS THE LIFE OF THE WORLD.** "In him was life." The Word is Life in its widest signification—the life of the body, the life of the soul, the life of the spirit. The world (including man), which is represented here as made by him, is also represented as in him as the Source of its continued preservation. "After having been the root of the tree, the Logos was also its sap." "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28). There is a perfect development of existence in virtue of his being our Life.

III. **THE RELATION OF THE LIFE TO THE LIGHT.** "And the Life was the Light of men." 1. *This refers to the period of man's innocence in Paradise, as the next clause to the fact of his fall.* 2. *Life developed in the form of light.* It is peculiar to no being on earth but man. (1) The light did not spring directly from the Word, but was an emanation of the life that man received from the Word. (2) The light is not (a) intellectual knowledge simply, (b) nor holiness, but (c) the light of good through the medium of life. There was a steady shining of the light in man's conscience and intellect and heart at his creation. (3) It was the light of the whole race of man, not that of the

**Jews only.** (4) May there not be an allusion, in the use of the two terms "life" and "light," to the tree of life and the tree of knowledge in Paradise?

**IV. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARKNESS.** "And the Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not." This points to the period of the fall of man. Life and light suggest the contrasted ideas of death and darkness. 1. *Light and darkness exist side by side in the spiritual world.* In the natural world, light expels the darkness, or darkness expels the light. The Light has always been shining, either in nature, providence, or revelation. Christ has never left himself without a witness. The Sun of Righteousness is still shining in darkness. Light is really "come into the world." 2. *The darkness neither apprehended nor overcame the light.* The light still shines, with an ever-widening border, as the darkness is being chased back. The darkness has not overpowered the light. But it has not any the better understood it or assimilated it. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

**Vers. 6—8.—The witness of the Baptist to the true Light.** We now come to the historic manifestation of the Word.

**I. THE PERSONALITY OF THE BAPTIST.** "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." 1. *He was the offspring of pious parents, and his birth was due to miraculous Divine interference.* 2. *He was a Nazarene in the ascetic aspect of his life.* 3. *He was the last prophet of the Old Testament dispensation—the link between the prophets of the old and the apostles of the new dispensations.* 4. *He was the forerunner of the Messiah, who was to come in the power of Elias, to preach the coming of the kingdom of heaven.* He was, in truth, "a man sent from God." His forerunnership ended with the baptism of Jesus, who then appeared visibly on the scene of his ministry. But his testimony only ceased with his life. 5. *It was by the Baptist that the author of this Gospel was introduced to Christ (ver. 35).*

**II. THE PURPOSE OF HIS TESTIMONY.** "The same came for witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." 1. *The witness-bearing was necessary, as the Word was to appear "in the likeness of sinful flesh."* Man in his blindness could not well discern him without some testimony. 2. *Witness-bearing is a fundamental idea in Christianity.* It implies faith, and a body of facts to be believed. 3. *It marks a distinct place for human instrumentality, even in connection with the conversion of souls.* 4. *Its design is to lead to belief.* "That all men through him might believe;" that is, through John's witness. (1) "Faith cometh by hearing." As through John's testimony Andrew and John became disciples of Christ, so still through the preaching of ministers are men brought to the Saviour. (2) The essence of the message is universal. It is no longer restricted in its blessings to Israel (Isa. xlix. 6). (3) The scope of the message is not stated. But there can be but one Object of faith—the Lamb of God, the Bridegroom, the Almighty Saviour.

**III. CORRECTION OF A GRAVE MISAPPREHENSION RESPECTING THE BAPTIST.** "He was not the Light, but came that he might bear witness of the Light." 1. *Some of the Jews probably imagined that John was the Christ.* (Comp. vers. 19, 20 with Luke iii. 15.) 2. *He was, by our Lord's own witness, "a burning and a shining light;"* rather, a candle, for Christ is himself the true Fountain of all light—the Light itself. 3. *It was a sign of the remarkable humility as well as sincerity of the Baptist's character, that he himself once and again, not only disclaimed the Messiahship, but confessed his own complete inferiority to Christ.* He had no inward struggle on effacing himself. "He must increase; I must decrease."

**Ver. 9.—The true Light in its manifestation.** **I. THE NATURE OF THIS LIGHT.** "There was the true Light." 1. *Christ was the true Light, as opposed to false or imperfect lights.* He was the ideal Light, not subject to the vicissitudes of time and space. 2. *He was the true Light in opposition to ceremonial types and shadows.* 3. *He was the true Light in opposition to all light that is borrowed from or communicated from another.*

**II. THE EXTENT OF THIS LIGHT IN ITS ACTION.** "It lighteth every man." "The darkness is past: the true Light now shineth." In a strict sense, all men receive the light of reason, and the consciousness of right and wrong; but, biblically considered

Christ shines sufficiently for the salvation of all men, both Jews and Gentiles, so as to leave them without excuse if in their blindness they refuse to see him.

III. ITS PROGRESS. It was ever "coming into the world." In prophecy, type, creed, judgment.

Vers. 10, 11.—*The double rejection of the Light.* I. THE FIRST REJECTION. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." These words describe the world's unbelief before his incarnation. 1. *He was here invisibly, though the world had no eyes to see him.* In him "all things live, and move, and have their being." The revelation of himself has been continuous since man was made. The Life has always been the Light of men. He was and has ever been in the world. 2. *The world's ignorance is all the more remarkable because "the world was made by him."* The world did not see the evidences of boundless skill and beauty all around. It is a precious thought to the believer that the Creator of the world is his Friend. "It is my Father's house. It is my Brother's handiwork." 3. *The mystery of the world's ignorance.* "The world knew him not." "The world by wisdom knew not God." The Apostle Paul found an altar to the "Unknown God" at Athens. What a satire on man's privileges! This darkest page in the world's history may well sadden us every time we read it.

II. THE SECOND REJECTION. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." 1. *Israel was the home of our Lord.* Its land, its cities, its temple, were all his own property, and were originally granted by himself. Israel was "his inheritance." 2. *His people, the Jews, were not left to interpret the light of nature, conscience, and history as they could.* Light first broke upon them when it broke upon Abraham, but it was only a preparation for the Incarnation, which is the central fact in the world's history—the pivot on which its history turns. 3. *His own people rejected him.* They "received him not." This is stronger than the statement that the world did not know him. The Jews were more guilty than the Gentiles in their rejection of the Redeemer, because they were of those "who see, and therefore their sin remaineth" (ch. ix. 41). "The God invoked by the nation appears in his temple, and is crucified by his own worshippers."

Vers. 12, 13.—*The grace of adoption.* The Jews might boast themselves of being children of Abraham, but Christ gives his disciples the far higher privilege of being sons of God.

I. THE NATURE OF THE RIGHT OR PRIVILEGE ENJOYED BY TRUE BELIEVERS. "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become the children of God." 1. *It is more than creation—sonship.* It is more than the relationship of God as a Father to all men as rational and moral creatures; that sonship belongs to all men by virtue of their birth. 2. *It is more than the restoration to man of his original relation with God before the Fall.* 3. *It is a new relation, involving a new filial standing and a new filial character,* and has for its blessings freedom of access to God, deep fellowship with him, a sure interest in his fatherly care and discipline, and a well-grounded hope of enjoying the inheritance of sons. 4. *It originates in the free grace of God; for we are "predestinated to the adoption of sons"* (Eph. i. 5). "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1, 2). We are said to "receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 5).

II. THE CONNECTION OF ADOPTION WITH THE PERSON AND MEDIATION OF JESUS CHRIST. Though the Father adopts (1 John iii. 1), it is the Son through whom we become sons of God. In virtue of his Mediatorship he gives the right to it. God predestinates us "to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ" (Eph. i. 5, 6).

III. THE ADOPTION IS EFFECTED BY REGENERATION ON GOD'S SIDE, AND BY FAITH ON MAN'S SIDE. Faith is the first and immediate effect of regeneration. Faith may be mentioned before regeneration, because it is, so to speak, that element which is nearest to man, and that element by which man has his first point of contact with Christ; but there can be no faith till it be given by God's Spirit in regeneration (Phil. i. 29). 1. *Regeneration is necessarily connected with the entrance of sinners into evangelical sonship.* "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Jews might believe that they were sons of God by

descent from Abraham, or from human parents in direct descent from the patriarch. The apostle says that believers are born: (1) "Not of blood." We speak of physical descent by this term, as blood is the seat of natural life. (2) "Nor of the will of the flesh," as a factor in natural birth. (3) "Nor of the will of man," as representing a will more independent of nature. All believers know that grace does not run in the blood, like the seeds of health or disease. Every godly parent who has ungodly children has sad knowledge of the fact. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." (4) "But of God." He is the true Author of regeneration. We are born of the Spirit. This is the first place in which the new birth is spoken of by name in Scripture. The apostle guards us against errors from different sides by showing what are not the sources of it, as well as what is its sole origin. It has no material origin; it springs not from human impulse or human will. 2. *The evangelical sonship is effected on man's part by faith in Christ.* "Even to as many as believe in his Name." There are other testimonies to the fact. Believers become "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John v. 1). There is no sonship to God without living faith in the Son of God. (1) Consider the nature of faith. (a) It is not a mere belief of the truth, though this is essentially implied in it. (b) Nor is it a belief of the fact that "Christ died for me," or any such proposition. (c) It is trusting in a Person. We believe on Christ for salvation. (2) Consider the object of faith. "His Name." The name is not merely that by which a person is known; "it is the inmost essence of the being in opposition to external manifestations." The Name is here the Word, that is, the Manifestation of the will and love of God.

Ver. 14.—*The reality of the Incarnation.* The apostle explains the saving effects just recorded by the historic fact that "the Word became flesh."

I. THE NATURE OF THE INCARNATION. "The Word became flesh." The miraculous conception is implied, though not expressed, in these words. It is the last time that John uses the term "Word" about Christ in his Gospel. Henceforth the term is "Jesus," or "the Lord." The word "flesh" denotes human nature—the entire human person.

1. *It is not said the Word became "body;"* because the proper phrase would have been, "The Word took a body;" and why should Jesus in that case speak of his "soul"? Yet the true doctrine of the Incarnation is that Christ took a human body and a human soul. The word "flesh" is not designed to express his visibility among men, but his entire human nature. 2. *It implies that the Word did not become a man like Adam before the Fall;* for he was made in "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). And "all flesh is grass." 3. *It does not imply that the Word took upon him "peccable flesh;"* for "he knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). 4. *It implies that he assumed the human nature common to all Adam's descendants.* Not that of any race, class, or family. He was to be Saviour for "all flesh." 5. *It implies that he became "flesh" in such a sense that he still retains the same nature.* "Our nature is on the throne." 6. *It implies that, though he "emptied himself" (Phil. ii. 7), he did not cease to be God;* for the Word still existed. 7. *It implies, in a word, the union of two perfect and distinct natures in one Person.* This doctrine is a great mystery. But it must be firmly held (1) against the Arians, who denied his Divinity; (2) against the Apollinarians, who held that the Word became only a body, the Divinity supplying the place of a soul; (3) against the Nestorians, who made the Godhead one Person, and the manhood another person; (4) against the Eutychians, who held that in the one Person there was mixture of the natures so as to produce a third. 8. *Consider the importance of this doctrine.* If "the Word became flesh," (1) the union of the two natures was designed to give infinite value to Christ's atoning sacrifice; (2) it gives us a Saviour who cannot but be touched with a feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15); (3) who can give us a perfect human example of excellence; (4) who dignifies the human body, and places his disciples under the most awful obligations not to defile or dishonour it.

II. THE HISTORICAL VISIBILITY OF THE INCARNATION. "And dwelt among us." The Word not merely entered human life, but remained in it for a time. The original word signifies "tabernacled," or "dwelt in a tent," implying: 1. *The transient nature of his visit to earth.* 2. *His detached existence among men.* Yet his visit lasted for three and thirty years.



**III. THE PERSONAL WITNESS TO HIS GLORY.** "We beheld his glory." The apostle was among those who beheld it with wondering awe, on the Mount of Transfiguration and at the various scenes of miracle in his life of service and suffering. He beheld it; for he speaks in his First Epistle of having heard and seen and handled the Word of life (1 John i. 1)

**IV. THE CHARACTER OF THE INCARNATE WORD.** 1. *It is that of the Only Begotten of the Father.* The "glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father." This expression implies the eternal generation of the Son from the Father; for if the Father was Father from all eternity, the Son must have been Son from all eternity. He spoke of "a glory which he had with the Father before the world was" (ch. xvii. 5). There is no inferiority involved in this sonship. There is a necessary defectiveness in all analogies taken from human parentage. Augustine said, "Show me and explain to me an eternal Father, and I will show to you and explain to you an eternal Son." 2. *It is the fulness of grace and truth.* "Full of grace and truth." This does not signify that his own life was filled with grace and truth, but that he is the Author of these two blessings, as we may infer from ver. 17, where "grace and truth" are said to have come "by Jesus Christ." (1) Grace is the revelation of God's love (1 John iv. 8, 16), and the gospel of Christ is full of grace to lost sinners of mankind. (2) Truth is the revelation of God's light (1 John i. 5), for Christ made known to us the way of acceptance and salvation.

Ver. 15.—*The testimony of John the Baptist.* I. **THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE MESSIAH.** "This was he of whom I spake." Thus he was the true forerunner of Christ.

II. **THE TRUE POSITION OF THE MESSIAH IN RELATION TO THE BAPTIST.** "He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me." 1. *There is here a recognition of the pre-existence of Christ, as well as of his higher dignity.* (Ch. iii. 33.) 2. *It is a testimony that bespeaks the sincere humility of the Baptist.* Though "amongst them that were born of women there was not a greater than John the Baptist," he took his true place of inferiority at the feet of Jesus. To exalt Christ was his mission. He never thinks of himself.

Vers. 16—18.—*Christ the Fulness of grace and truth.* We next have the testimony of the entire Church.

I. **THE FULNESS OF CHRIST REALIZED IN THE CHURCH.** "And of his fulness we all have received, even grace for grace." 1. *The fulness of Christ.* It is the plenitude of Divine attributes and graces. (1) It is the fulness of the Godhead indwelling bodily in him (Col. ii. 9). (2) It is that fulness out of which the Christian draws for the needs of his spiritual life. "Ye are in him filled to the full" (Col. ii. 9). It is the fulness, not of a vessel, but of a fountain. All our spiritual wants are supplied out of Christ by virtue of our union with him. His Spirit conveys the sap of grace through all the branches of the vine from him as its Root. (3) It finds its ultimate embodiment in the "body of Christ," which is "the fulness of him who filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23). 2. *The wide extent of its reception.* "We have all received." There may be an allusion to the Gnostic idea that only a certain spiritual class would be received into this fulness. The fulness of Christ is for all believers of both dispensations. Its blessed universality has nothing in common with the esoteric exclusiveness of Gnostic spiritualism. 3. *The measure of the reception.* "Even grace for grace." (1) This does not merely imply the abundance of the supply. (2) But the principle on which the supply is made. Grace makes way for grace. The power to receive it increases or diminishes according to the use we make of it. Therefore we must not "receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. vi. 1). "Whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance" (Matt. xiii. 12). "Under the Law a grace is received in exchange for some desert. But in the new order of things it is a grace received which becomes our title to receive a new grace."

II. **THE ESSENTIAL GLORY OF CHRISTIANITY AS DISTINGUISHED FROM JUDAISM.** "For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." 1. *Mark the superiority of the gospel to the Law.* (1) Each is Divine; for the Law given by Moses was God's, as well as the gospel. But (a) Moses was "a servant," Christ a

Son (Heb. iii. 5); (b) the Law could not justify,—it “worked wrath” (Rom. iv. 15); (c) the inferiority of the Law is implied in its useful pedagogic function, for “it was the schoolmaster to lead us to Christ” (Gal. iii. 24); (d) it imposed a heavy yoke of service. (2) Yet we are not to infer that, under the dispensation of Law, there was no grace or truth for Old Testament saints. They were justified by grace like New Testament saints (Rom. iv.), and their spiritual experience showed, especially in the Psalter, their experience of both grace and truth. But the characteristic spirit of the two dispensations is different. The one had a twilight duskiness, which disappeared before the noonday radiance of the other. 2. *Mark the distinguishing glory of the gospel.* “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” This is the first mention of this name in the Gospel, and it seems fitly to link together the two dispensations; for Jesus is the name of the humanity, and Christ is the name that marks his relation to the old dispensation. (1) The treasury of grace is in Christ. Take away Moses from the Law, and yet the Law abides in all its authority; but take away Christ from the gospel, and there is no more grace or truth for man. (a) He gives the gospel of grace. (b) His salvation is entirely by grace. (c) He plants grace in the hearts of men. (2) The treasury of truth is in Christ. (a) He is the Truth itself, as he is the Light (ver. 4). (b) The gospel reveals the “truth as it is in Jesus.” (c) He is the fulfilment of all the types of the old dispensation.

III. CHRIST THE ONLY REVEALER OF THE FATHER. “No man hath ever yet seen God; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” The apostle intends here to develop the idea of the fulness of truth as it is in Christ. 1. *God is invisible to man in this life.* The eye of mortal man could not bear the sight of God. “There shall no man see me and live” (Exod. xxxiii. 20). (1) The theophanies of the Old Testament were those of the Son, not of the Father. (2) It is a useless question to discuss whether man will ever see God even in heaven. All the allusions to God’s invisibility in Scripture apply to man’s mortal condition on earth. It is implied that the next life will bring to us the sight of God (1 John iii. 2). 2. *God is revealed to us by his Son.* (1) As he is “the Brightness of the Father’s glory, the express Image of his Person” (Heb. i. 3). “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” “God was manifest in the flesh.” (2) He is the Revealer of the Father’s truth, wisdom, love, holiness, and power. He is, above all, the Revealer of the way of salvation. (3) He is the Revealer, because he is in the bosom of the Father. (a) The Son reveals God, not simply as God, but as the Father. (b) Because he is the only begotten Son of the Father, dwelling in his bosom, (a) implying oneness of essence, (b) oneness of counsel, (c) oneness of affection.

IV. CONCLUSION. 1. *We ought to give due honour to the Son.* We cannot think too highly of him. 2. *We ought to listen to his words with holy awe, and obey him with all the sincerity of our hearts.*

Vers. 19—28.—*The second testimony of John the Baptist.* A deputation, consisting of the priests and Levites from Jerusalem, the ecclesiastical centre of Judaism, visited the Baptist as he was baptizing disciples at Bethany beyond Jordan, for the purpose of ascertaining whether he was the Messiah or the forerunner, of ancient prophecy. The scene is interesting as the place where the first disciples were made and the foundation of the Christian Church laid. The interview occurred after the baptism and the temptation. We now come to the properly historical part of the Gospel.

I. THE POSITION ASSERTED FOR HIMSELF BY JOHN. It is one which displays his true humility. He is clear, frank, and unambiguous. “He confessed, and denied not.” He asserts his position: 1. *Negatively.* (1) “I am not the Christ.” Some mistakenly thought he was. “All men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not” (Luke iii. 15). The members of the deputation may have known that John was the son of Zacharias, a priest, and therefore a Levite himself, and remembered the incident in the temple; but, as his mother was of the house of David, from whom the Messiah was to spring, they might be led to suspect that John was himself the Messiah. They gave John more honour than Jesus: they esteemed the one for his priestly lineage; the other was only “the carpenter’s Son.” The answer of John is perfectly explicit. He claims honour, not for himself, but for Christ. (2) He is not Elias. “Art thou Elias?” The question was suggested by Malachi’s prophecy concerning

"God sending Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord" (Mal. iv. 5). The deputies thought, "If this is not the Christ, perhaps he is his forerunner, Elijah." How could he say he was not Elias, when Christ himself says elsewhere, "This is Elias" (Matt. xi. 14)? The answer of John is, "I am not the Elias who was personally taken up to heaven, and whose return to earth is expected by you." But John was Elias in the sense of being clothed "with the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke i. 17). Elias was the antitype of John. The typical resemblance between the two is remarkable. (3) He is not the prophet—neither the prophet spoken of by Moses (Deut. xviii. 15, 18), nor "Jeremiah, or one of the prophets" (Matt. xiv. 14). 2. *Positively.* He is a voice—"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." He points to Isaiah's prophecy concerning himself. He was but a voice to be heard, not a great personage to receive the homage of men.

II. THE OFFICE OF THE BAPTIST. It was simply to baptize as a preparation for the recognition of Christ. *The deputies questioned his authority to baptize.* "Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not that Christ, or Elias, or one of the prophets?" (1) They evidently expected the Messiah or his forerunner to baptize, probably from the language of Ezek. xxxvi. 24, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." (2) Besides, the baptism of John was an innovation. The Gentiles had hitherto been baptized on their acceptance of Judaism, but it had been unusual to baptize Jews. The action of John, therefore, had the appearance of inaugurating a new religion. Therefore they demanded his authority. (3) His answer was practically, "My baptism with water is subordinate to a higher baptism. I baptize for another, not for myself; to make disciples for Christ, the Mighty One, who was before me; not for myself." (4) He points to Christ as a Person standing among them whom they knew not. He himself was not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes; but the Pharisees from Jerusalem, so ultra-conservative of ordinances and usages, could neither see, nor acknowledge, nor believe in him. How natural it was that "they should reject the counsel of God, not being baptized of John" (Luke vii. 30)! How true it still is that Christ is still standing among thousands who will neither see, nor reverence, nor trust him!

VERS. 29—34.—*Third testimony borne by the Baptist to Jesus.* This incident, which occurred on the following day, must have been immediately after the temptation. The Baptist identifies Christ by implication, not by name.

I. THE REDEEMER IS IDENTIFIED BY HIS WORK. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" This title is taken from Isa. liii., which the Jewish commentators themselves originally applied to the Messiah. The passage sets forth: 1. *The Object offered in sacrifice.* "The Lamb of God." (1) It applies to Christ on account of his personal character—on account of (a) the innocence and holiness of his life; (b) his meekness and lowliness; (c) his patience in suffering. (2) It applies to Christ as the great Sacrifice for sin. There is but one sacrifice that could correspond to the Paschal sacrifice, and that, as we know, was the basis of the whole sacrificial system of the Jews. (a) He is God's Lamb; (a) because God claims him as his own; (b) because God provides him. (b) He is "the Lamb"—the only one, not one out of many. Many lambs were sacrificed in Old Testament times. All the shadows disappeared, when Christ, as the Substance, came. It is an advantage to have the whole attention concentrated upon one glorious spectacle—the Lamb of God! 2. *The object or effect of the sacrifice.* "Which taketh away the sin of the world." The word signifies bearing as well as taking away. Christ takes away sin by bearing it. (1) He bears sin. The phrase implies the idea of a heavy burden or of penal endurance, pointing inevitably to the penal consequences inseparable from the sins of mankind. He was "made sin"—the world's sin—and bore it, thus enduring the penalty due to the sins of the world. (a) The word "beareth sin," in the present tense, is not a mere prophecy as to what would occur at Calvary; (b) nor does it imply merely the constant efficacy of the sacrifice; (c) but the fact that he was even then the actual Bearer of the world's sin. Thus there is no foundation for the notion that he was not a Sin-bearer except on the cross. He bore sin all through his life. (2) "He taketh away" sin. He does it by bearing it. "We know that Jesus Christ was manifested to take away our sins" (1 John iii. 5). Therefore we may say that Christ is (a) a Saviour, not a mere Prophet; (b) a perfect Saviour (Heb. vii. 25); (c) an unwearying Saviour. 3. *The burden*

*removed by the sacrifice.* "The sin of the world." (1) It is the sin, not the sins. (a) This does not signify original sin as the root-sin of the world; but sin in the mass, regarded in its unity as the common guilt and corruption of the world. (b) It does not refer merely to the punishment of sin, for the Lamb of God secures by his sacrifice the complete extirpation of sin. (2) It is the sin of the world. (a) Not the sin of the Jews, but of the Gentiles also; for it had been said long before to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 3). (b) The Baptist, in using the singular number, thought, not so much of the extent, as of the nature of sin. The sin of the world is the sin that belongs to the world as such—which is of the world, from the world. On the world's side there is nothing but sin; on God's side nothing but the Lamb of God. See how God overcomes with good the evil of the world.

II. THE REDEEMER IS CLEARLY IDENTIFIED IN HIS PERSON. "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is become before me: for he was before me." These words now meet us for the third time. The human and Divine natures are exhibited in one sentence. The Baptist believed in the pre-existence of the Messiah.

III. THE EXTRAORDINARY MODE IN WHICH THE REDEEMER WAS IDENTIFIED BY JOHN HIMSELF. 1. "*I knew him not.*" Yet John must have known him, for else he could not have hesitated as he did about baptizing our Lord. "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Matt. iii. 14). The son of Elisabeth must have personally known the Son of Mary. The Baptist means that he did not know him as Messiah, and the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus, which he immediately records, points to the method and circumstances of the revelation. 2. *Jesus was revealed to the Baptist by the descent of the Spirit upon him as a dove.* (1) The sign—the descent and abiding of the dove upon Jesus—was seen by the Baptist as an actual fact, and signified the actual consecration of the Redeemer to his Divine work. (2) The two baptisms—the baptism in water, and the baptism in the Holy Ghost. (a) John's baptism was (a) "that he might be made manifest in Israel;" (b) it was "unto repentance for remission of sins"—not that it effected such a remission, for John had no such power, and never claimed it—but it pointed to that which could alone take away sin. (b) Christ's baptism was not (a) the baptism which he was to institute for the Christian Church,—it was not a baptism of water; (b) nor was it a baptism which any man can give, whether priest or minister; (c) nor was it a baptism for miraculous gifts at Pentecost; (d) but it was a baptism of regenerating grace—such a baptism as the dying thief received, though not baptized with water, such a baptism as Simon Magus never received, though he was admitted into the communion of the Church by the ministers of Christ.

IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RECORD JUST MADE BY THE BAPTIST. "And I have seen, and I have borne witness that this is the Son of God." The vision is regarded as still present and remaining in its blessed results. He sets forth the abiding record that Jesus is the Son of God as well as the Son of man, therefore a Divine Being.

Vers. 35—40.—*The first gathering of disciples to Jesus.* We trace in these words the first beginnings of the Christian Church. It began with two disciples, Andrew and John; and the first disciples became the first preachers.

I. THE BAPTIST'S RENEWED TESTIMONY TO CHRIST. "Behold the Lamb of God!" 1. *John and the Redeemer had now met for the last time;* and the Baptist was already preparing for the change in their relative positions implied in the entrance of Jesus upon public life. "He must increase, but I must decrease." 2. *His last testimony was but a repetition of his first testimony.* "Behold the Lamb of God!" (1) This was but a little seed, but it had a mighty growth. (2) The doctrine of Christ crucified is for every age the power of God to salvation. (3) We need to repeat the same truth, perhaps in a different form, to produce the due effect of the gospel.

II. THE EFFECT OF THIS RENEWED TESTIMONY. The two disciples of John "followed" Jesus. This was the decisive act that determined their destiny for ever. The words of John excited their wonder, their admiration, their desire for further knowledge. 1. *They seek a more intimate knowledge of Jesus.* The Saviour, seeing them follow him, asked them, "What seek ye?" As he knew their hearts, the words were evidently spoken both to encourage and to stimulate to further inquiry. They answer, "Where

dwellest thou?" They desired a private interview that they might have a deeper insight into his character and mission. They sought a Person rather than a gift. 2. *The Lord fully gratifies their desire, and satisfies all their hopes.* "Come and see." (1) The interview was not postponed till the day after. The Lord bids them come at once. His salvation is a present blessing. (2) It was a protracted interview. "They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was the tenth hour;" that is, ten in the forenoon. (a) There was full time to satisfy all their doubts and answer all their questions. (b) The day was a turning-point in their lives; and therefore they fix with exactness the very limits of their stay with Jesus. (3) The interview had a satisfactory result. The exclamation of Andrew to his brother Simon, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ," attests the blessed discovery. (a) The discovery of Jesus implied a previous seeking. (b) It was unexpected. (c) It was joyful. (d) It was final.

III. THE INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE OF ANDREW'S CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP. "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." 1. *He was among the first called to be Christ's disciples.* He is therefore one of the two first members of the Christian Church. 2. *Mark his priority to Peter.* That apostle to whom the Church of Rome assigns the primacy, was not the first to accept or follow Christ.

Vers. 41, 42.—*The reception of Peter by Christ.* Andrew's first action is to make his discovery of the Messiah known to his brother.

I. MARK THE PROMPT ZEAL, THE QUIET HELPFULNESS, THE YEARNING FAITH, OF ANDREW. "He first findeth his own brother Simon"—implying that he afterwards found John's brother, James, for a like object—"and brought him to Jesus." 1. *Andrew follows a natural instinct in carrying the glad tidings of salvation to his brother.* Simon was one of the nearest and the dearest in life. It was an instinct of grace likewise that Andrew should desire his brother to share in the blessings of the common salvation. 2. *How much good is often done by the private suggestion or inquiry of a Christian friend!* 3. *What momentous consequences flowed from Andrew's loving act!* He was not (1) the writer of an Epistle, (2) nor the founder of a Church, (3) but the opener of a new career to one of the greatest of the apostles. He was the instrument by whom Peter was first led into the paths of truth, and on that account is to be held in "everlasting remembrance." (4) Our last notice of Andrew is equally characteristic of him, for, if he found Peter first, he found others afterwards. It was he and Philip who introduced the Greek strangers to Christ (ch. xii. 20).

II. MARK THE MODE OF OUR LORD'S RECEPTION OF PETER. "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." 1. *Our Lord knew Peter's character.* The Jews regarded the knowledge of the hearts of men as an attribute of the Messiah. 2. *The change of name implies a change of character or position.* So it was in the cases of Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob. The Master here takes possession of his servant, and consecrates him at once and wholly to his service. 3. *The name Cephas—by which Peter was exclusively known to the Corinthians, and, perhaps, to other Churches—implies strength of character, vigour of resolution, and the power of aggression,* which had their place side by side with an honest-hearted impulsiveness. 4. *The selection of disciples, like Peter and Andrew, for the propagation of the gospel, unlearned as they were in the world's scholarship, is a powerful evidence of the truth of Christianity.*

Vers. 43, 44.—*The calling of Philip.* Jesus was now leaving Bethany beyond Jordan for Galilee; and as he was about to set out, he summoned Philip, a Galilæan, to discipleship.

I. THE CALL OF CHRIST TO PHILIP. "He findeth Philip, and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me." 1. *The birthplace of Philip.* He was a native of the district of Bethsaida, and belonged to the city of Andrew and Peter, and must therefore have been acquainted with them. Probably through them was he first brought within the sphere of Christ's influence. It was natural that our Lord should seek his first disciples from the district which was to become the scene of his fullest ministry. Philip is a Jew, though he bears a Greek name. 2. *Mark in what different ways our Lord draws*

*disciples to himself.* While Peter was drawn to him by Andrew, Philip was "found" by Christ himself without any human intervention, just as he finds all who are honestly seeking after the way of life. 3. *The command of Christ is urgent.* "Follow me." There is no preface, or promise, or explanation. The command implies: (1) That Philip was to throw in his lot with Christ, as Ruth did with Naomi. (2) That he was to follow him as a servant obeys a master, "doing his will from the heart," as a learner follows a teacher; like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus. (3) That he was to walk in his steps and conform to his example.

II. PHILIP'S ANSWER TO THE CALL. 1. *There is no recorded answer in words.* But his obedience was very prompt. There was a slowness of apprehension in Philip observable in later times, which shows that he needed a prompt and sudden call. 2. *His response to the call is implied in the words he addresses immediately after to Nathanael.* "We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." (1) This implies that he was an habitual student of the Old Testament, for he quite understood that the Redeemer was foretold by Moses and the prophets. "They are they," says Jesus himself, "which testify of me." We ought not to despise the Old Testament, for there is much of Christ in it. (2) It implies that he had some personal knowledge of Christ, for, as a native of the Bethsaida district, he must have known Nazareth, and, perhaps, had often seen "the Son of Joseph." (3) It was the instinct of grace that led him to bring Nathanael to Christ. Perhaps Nathanael was a relative; he was at least a neighbour, for Cana was near to the city of Andrew and Peter.

Vers. 45—51.—*The calling of Nathanael.* After Jesus finds Philip, Philip finds Nathanael. "One lighted torch serves to light another, and thus faith is propagated."

I. THE CHARACTER OF NATHANAEL, OR BARTHOLOMEW. He was a devout Jew, a student of Scripture, of a thoughtful temper, and of prayerful habits. He was above all a guileless Israelite: "An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

II. THE DIFFICULTIES OF NATHANAEL. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" 1. *A guileless man may have prejudices as well as difficulties;* but in this case the difficulties were of more account than the prejudices, because they may have been grounded upon the fact that there was no prediction of a Messiah issuing from Nazareth. 2. *It is not inconsistent with his guileless character that he should refuse to be satisfied without sufficient reason.* Nathanael was not a simpleton, to be carried about by every wind of doctrine or by every false Christ. 3. *It is a proof of a genuinely sincere and straightforward nature that sufficient evidence brings full persuasion to his mind.* It is not enough that Jesus unveils his character; he must also give him evidence of a power to know all that Nathanael did as well as thought. "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

III. CONSIDER HOW CHRIST DEALS WITH A GUILTESS MAN. Our Lord uses many tests according to the different characters of men. 1. *There is no test like that of personal experience.* "Come and see," said Philip. It is impossible to conceive of wiser counsel. Few doubters are influenced by reasoning and argument. Philip says to Nathanael, "I have found a Saviour: come and see him for yourself." 2. *Christ welcomes the guiltless inquirer.* This is evident from the encouraging insight expressed, in the words, "Behold an Israelite indeed!" 3. *Christ satisfies him, for he wins his faith.* Nathanael utters the emphatic testimony: "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel"—a testimony at once to Christ's Divinity and his Messiahship. 4. *Christ promises a still fuller satisfaction to the intellect and heart of all disciples.* "From henceforth ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (1) This does not refer to the Transfiguration, which was not witnessed by all to whom these words were addressed; (2) nor to the Ascension, for the heavens were not opened and angels were not seen on that occasion; (3) nor to the ministry of angels as they waited on Jesus at the various stages of his trial; (4) it refers to Jacob's ladder, which signified the opening up of a new and living way into the holiest of all "by Christ's flesh," in virtue of which not only greater proofs, in the shape of miracle and signs, would be given to the sonship of Jesus than any they had yet witnessed, but a constant communication would be kept up between heaven and earth, even after the Son of man should have left the world, through virtue of his

Mediatorship. The angels are the messengers of the Redeemer's will, constantly ascending and descending in their errands of mercy and love. 5. *Christ reveals himself to the whole race of man as the Son of man.* This chapter is singularly rich in the names that are ascribed to Christ. It contains no less than twenty-one names or titles of him. But the most precious to the believer's heart, in the longing for sympathy, is that which Christ only applies to himself, "the Son of man."

### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

**Ver. 9.—The Divine daybreak.** The evangelist writes as one who loves, admires, and venerates him of whom it is his office to inform his fellow-men. He has one great figure to portray, one great name to exalt, one great heart to unfold. His language is such as would not be befitting were he heralding the advent even of a prophet or a saint. How bold, how beautiful, how impressive are his figures! John speaks of the *Divine Word*, uttering forth the thought and will of God in the hearing of mankind; of the *Divine Life*, quickening the world from spiritual death; of the *Divine Light*, scattering human darkness, and bringing in the morning of an immortal day. No terms can be too lofty in which to welcome the advent of the Son of God—a theme worthy of praise for ever ardent, of a song for ever new.

**I. CHRIST IS IN HIMSELF THE TRUE LIGHT.** 1. As distinguished from, though symbolized by, physical light. When you watch for the morning, and see the crimson dawn fill all the east with promise of the coming day; when from the hill-top at noon you scan the landscape where valley, grove, and river are lit up by the splendour of the summer sun; when you "almost think you gaze through golden sunsets into heaven;" when you watch the lovely afterglow lingering on snow-clad Alpine summits; when by night you watch the lustrous moon emerge from a veil of clouds, or trace the flaming constellations;—then, remember this, Christ is the *true* Light. 2. As contrasting with false lights. It is said that upon some coasts wreckers have been known to kindle misleading lights in order to lure confiding seamen to their destruction. Emblem of teachers and of systems that deceive men by representing his bodily and earthly interests as of supreme importance—that bound his horizon by the narrow limits of time, that tell him that God is unknowable. Opposed to such is that heavenly light which never leads astray, and never pales or sets. 3. As distinct from the imperfect lights, in which there was Divine truth, although but dim. There were in such philosophy as the wise and lofty-minded heathen produced, rays of truth which came from God; but these were mingled with the smoke and mists of human error. The Hebrew prophets proclaimed Divine truth and inculcated Divine righteousness; yet they were lost in the Christ who fulfilled them, as the stars are quenched before the rising sun. 4. Christ was the true Light, as revealing the truth concerning God and his character and purposes of mercy; as pouring the lustre of moral purity over a sin-darkened world; as diffusing abroad spiritual life, and with it spiritual brightness, gladness, and hope. He is both luminous and illuminating.

**II. CHRIST IS THE LIGHT COMING INTO THE WORLD.** In himself he was and is the true Light; but we have reason to be grateful, because, as the Sun of Righteousness, he has arisen upon the world with healing in his wings. 1. This light came into the world even before the advent—has always been streaming into human nature and human society. Reason and conscience are "the candle of the Lord," by which he lights up our inmost being. He who first said, "Let there be light!" having provided that which is natural, did not withhold that which is spiritual. 2. Yet this "coming" was especially in the earthly ministry of our Redeemer. Conversing with Nicodemus, Jesus said, "The Light is come into the world;" and before the close of his ministry he cried, "I am come a Light into the world"—expressions exactly corresponding with the language here used by John. It was to a world which needed him, which was in darkness and the shadow of death for want of him, that the Saviour came. His whole ministry was a holy, gracious shining; and in his light there were many who loved to walk. 3. The Divine light did not cease to come into the world when Christ ascended. In fact, at first, the world generally neither welcomed nor even recognized its Divine Enlightener. Only after the vain attempt to quench the heavenly light did men learn

its preciousness and power. From the celestial sphere this glorious and unquenchable Luminary casts its illumining and vivifying rays in a wider sweep. Christ has by his Spirit been constantly "coming" into the world, and with ever-extending beneficence, and has thus been delivering men from the horrors of a moral midnight gloom.

III. CHRIST IS THE LIGHT THAT LIGHTETH EVERY MAN. The largeness of this language quite accords with the teaching of the New Testament generally. 1. There is in every human breast a Divine light—the light of the Word—not dependent upon human forms of doctrine. A ray from heaven will guide all those who look for it, and who are ready to be led by it. 2. The purpose of Christ's coming into the world was that all men might through him enjoy spiritual illumination. The need of such enlightenment is apparent to all who consider the ignorance and sinfulness of mankind, calling for both a revelation of truth and supernatural motives to obedience. Jews and Gentiles both, if in different measure, required a new and spiritual daybreak. Christ came "a Light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the Glory of God's people Israel." Not merely all the nations of men, but all classes and conditions, and even all characters, needed this Divine shining. Those whose eyes were turned to the light found in him the fulfilment of their desires. Those who had been trying to content themselves with darkness, in many cases learned to cherish a better hope, and came to enjoy a purer satisfaction.

PRACTICAL APPEAL. The day has broken, the sun shines; Christ, the true Light, lighteth every man. Yet it is for each hearer of the gospel to decide whether he will accept the light and walk in it, or not. The mere shining abroad of spiritual light is not enough; there must be an eye to behold the celestial rays, and that eye must be opened by the influences of the Spirit of God, that it may welcome the sacred sunlight. There are still those who love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For such, until their hatred or indifference towards Christ be changed, the day has dawned, and the Sun has risen, in vain.—T.

VERS. 10—13.—*Christ rejected and accepted.* It is related by an ancient historian that an Eastern tribe were so afflicted by the blazing and intolerable heat of the sun, that they were accustomed, when the great luminary arose in the morning, to assail him with their united and vehement curses. It is hard to believe that, the benefits of sunlight being so obvious as they are, any should be found other than glad and grateful for the shining of the orb of day. "The light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." The rising of the Sun of Righteousness, however, was, we know, hailed in very different manners by different classes of men; as in these verses is very strikingly pointed out by the inspired evangelist. The same diversity obtains to this day among the hearers of the gospel of Christ. There are still those who reject and those who receive the Saviour.

I. CHRIST REJECTED. 1. *By whom?* The evangelist speaks, first generally, and then specially, upon this point. (1) The world at large is said to have refused the offered blessing—to have been insensible to the character, and incredulous as to the claims, of Immanuel. This is the more surprising because the world is full of witnesses to the Divine Word; because it was actually made by him; because his natural attributes are displayed in the physical universe, his moral purposes in providence, his righteous law in conscience. (2) More particularly it is said that his own people, *i.e.* the Jewish nation, disclaimed their Messiah. This is the more surprising because the Hebrew race was, as it were, a Church, based upon the expectation of his coming; because they possessed prophecies regarding him; because they were familiar with sacrifices, types, and institutions, all of which in some way witnessed to him. Especially it is surprising when we remember that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God, which might have prepared them to receive the perfect Divine revelation. 2. *In what way?* (1) They "knew him not." Some—both Jews and Gentiles—never paid any attention to Jesus, to his discourses, his mighty works, his holy and benevolent character. Some simply indulged an idle curiosity, in gazing upon his works or listening to his discourses. And others, less inattentive, yet never really comprehended the spiritual purpose of his mission, the spiritual significance of his teaching. (2) They "received him not;" *e.g.* the inhabitants of Nazareth thrust him out of their city! The Gergasenes besought him to depart from their borders! A certain village in Samaria



refused to receive him! Chorazin and Bethsaida were upbraided by him because of their unbelief and their rejection of his claims! Over Jerusalem Jesus wept, on account of the inattention of the people of the metropolis to his solemn warnings and gracious entreaties! 3. *For what reasons?* (1) His humility was an offence to their worldliness and pride. (2) His holy character was a rebuke to their sin. (3) His spiritual teaching was a rebuke to their formality. (4) His life of benevolence was a rebuke to their selfishness and haughtiness. 4. *With what results?* (1) Their guilt was aggravated by their rejection of his mission. (2) They were speedily deprived of the privileges they despised and abused. (3) The impenitent incurred spiritual disaster and ruin.

II. CHRIST ACCEPTED. John states first, what must have been the general impression during our Lord's ministry, that Jews and Gentiles alike rejected him. Indeed, his unjust, cruel, and violent death was sufficient proof of this. But there was another side to this picture. 1. *Observe by whom the Son of God was gratefully and cordially received.* This very chapter witnesses to the power of the Lord Jesus over individual souls; for it tells of the adhesion of Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael. The Gospels relate the call of the twelve and of the seventy. They afford us a passing glimpse into the soul-history of such men as Nicodemus and Joseph, of such families as that of Lazarus at Bethany. And they exhibit Christ's attractive power over very different characters, such as Zacchæus and the penitent thief upon the cross. After the Ascension, Christ's converts were reckoned, not by individuals, but by thousands. And throughout the Christian centuries, men from every clime and of every race have been led by the Spirit to receive Jesus as the Son of God. 2. *Observe the description given of their reception of Christ.* They "believed on his Name." The "Name" is full of significance. Whether we examine the name "Jesus," or "Christ," or "Immanuel," the Name sets before us the object of our faith. Those who receive the Saviour who is thus designated, believe what prophecy foretold of him and what he declared concerning his own person, character, and work. They trust in him as in an all-sufficient Mediator, and obey him as their Lord. 3. *Observe the privilege accruing to those who receive Christ.* (1) They partake a spiritual and Divine birth. The new relation begins a new spiritual life. This is further explained in our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, where Jesus refers this spiritual birth to the Holy Spirit himself. (2) They become children of God, taking by "right" a place in the Divine family. This exalted and happy position involves participation in Divine favour and love, in the moral image of the heavenly Father, in all the society and the immunities of this glorious kindred, in the eternal inheritance and home.

APPLICATION. Our treatment of the Lord Christ makes the decisive turning-point in our spiritual history. Those who are once brought into contact with him, by hearing his gospel, are by that fact placed in a new and solemn position of responsibility. To reject him is to reject pardon, righteousness, and life. To accept him is to enter the Divine family, to enjoy the Divine favour, to live the Divine, the spiritual, the immortal life.—T.

Ver. 14.—*The inference from the human to the Divine.* The parenthesis in this verse is remarkable as written in the first person. There must be a reason for the evangelist's departure from his ordinary practice of writing in the narrative style. It seems that John was so impressed by the solemnity and value of the witness he was bearing, that he was constrained to break his own rule, and to speak explicitly of what he himself had actually seen, and of what he himself had come firmly to believe. Regarding this parenthesis only, we find here the record of personal *observation*, and, in closest connection therewith, the declaration of personal *conviction*.

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE WITNESS. "We beheld his glory." 1. John and his fellow-apostles knew Christ in his humanity—in the "flesh," as the expression is in this passage. 2. They knew him as he "tabernacled" among them. John and Andrew, when the Baptist directed their attention to Jesus, inquired of him, "Where dwellest thou?" and at his invitation visited him and abode with him. The writer of this Gospel enjoyed peculiar opportunities of acquaintance, nay, of intimacy, with the Prophet of Nazareth, whose beloved disciple he became. If one human being ever knew another, John knew Jesus; he not only was constantly with him, his disposition and character rendered him specially fit for judging and appreciating him. 3.

John and his colleagues bore witness that they recognized their Master's "glory." Why is such language used? Why his "glory"? He was a peasant woman's Son, and remained in the condition of life to which he was born. There was nothing in his garb, his appearance, his associations, the outward circumstances of his lot, which, in the view of men generally, could justify such an expression. These men must have had their own conception of "glory." As spiritual Hebrews, they had a noble idea of the majesty, the righteousness, the purity of God, and also of the moral splendour of the Divine Law. Thus it came to pass that, enlightened by the Spirit, they discerned glory where to the eyes of others there was only humiliation. They saw the *moral glory* of purity and benevolence in the Lord's Person and character, in the "grace" which he displayed in dealing with suppliants and penitents, in the "truth" which he uttered and embodied. They could not fail to remark the glory of his miracles, of his transfiguration, of his victory over death, of the manner in which he quitted the earth in which he had sojourned. All this, as intelligent and sympathetic witnesses, John and his companions beheld, and to this they testified.

II. **THE INFERENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN.** The glory was "of the Only Begotten of the Father." They knew well that the world to which Jesus came needed a Divine Saviour. Such a Saviour they were encouraged by the word of prophecy to expect. And their familiarity with the character and the mission of Jesus led them to hail the Son of man as Son of God. If Jesus were not the Only Begotten of the Father, how could they account for the facts of his ministry, for the authority he wielded, the claims he made? He had called himself the Son of God; he had lived like the Son of God; he had wrought the works of God. He had been addressed as the Son of the living God, and had accepted the appellation. Were the disciples to forget all this; to persuade themselves that they had been in a mist of bewilderment; to give up their deepest convictions, their purest and most ennobling beliefs? If not, then they must needs assert their belief that the glory they had seen was that of the Only Begotten of the Father. The same inference is binding upon us. To deny of Jesus what John here affirms of him is to leave the Church without a foundation, the heart without a refuge, the world without a hope. If Christ be not what John represents him as being, then the world can never know and rejoice in a full and personal revelation of the supreme mind and heart and will. It may be said that this is the misfortune of humanity, and that it must be accepted as inevitable. But the text points out to us a better way. The sincere and impressive language of John encourages us first to realize to ourselves the unique moral majesty of Jesus, and then to draw from this the inference which he and other witnesses of Jesus' character and life drew so firmly and conclusively—the inference, namely, that he was none other than the Son of God, deserving of human reverence and faith, love and devotion. The witness of Christ's companions we cannot reject. Their convictions concerning their Master and Friend we are abundantly justified in sharing. If we have a heart capable of appreciating the Saviour's moral glory, we shall not be without guidance in estimating the justice of his claim to superhuman dignity—to Divine authority.—T.

Vers. 19—28.—*A disclaimer and a claim.* When our Lord Jesus came into this world, he did not come as one isolated from the race he designed to save. He condescended to take his place—the most honourable place—in a long and illustrious succession. He superseded the last prophet of the old dispensation; he commissioned the first prophets of the new. The herald and forerunner of our Lord perfectly comprehended his own relation to his Master, and felt it a dignity to occupy a position of Divine appointment, although a position of inferiority, in respect to him. The query put to John by the leaders of the Jewish Church at Jerusalem was natural and proper; it was evidence of the interest which John's mission was exciting in the land; and it gave the Baptist an opportunity of both declaring himself and witnessing to his Lord.

I. **JOHN'S DISCLAIMER.** No doubt there was an expectation, general and eager, of One who, in accordance with Hebrew prophecy, should be the Deliverer and Ruler of God's people Israel. From varying motives—in some cases with spiritual yearning, in other cases with political expectation—the Jews turned anxiously towards every personage of distinction and influence who arose among the people. Thus they turned to John, whose character was austere and inflexible as that of a Hebrew seer, and

whose popular power was manifest from the multitude of his adherents and admirers. In these circumstances, John's first duty was to give an unequivocal answer to the inquiry of the Jews. This inquiry was pointed and particular. Was John Elias, again visiting the people who revered him as one of their holiest and mightiest saints? There was something in his appearance, his habits, his speech, that suggested this possibility. Or was he "the prophet," less definitely designated? Or could it be that he was none other than the Messiah? The times were ripe for the advent of the promised Deliverer; John evidently possessed a spiritual authority, a popular power, such as Israel had not seen for many a generation. To every such inquiry John had only one answer: "I am not." In this disclaimer we recognize both the intelligence and the candour of the forerunner. A weak mind might have been overpowered by interest so profound and widespread. A self-seeking and ambitious mind might have taken advantage of such an opportunity to assert a personal authority and to climb to the throne of power. John was superior to such temptations. Though greater than others born of women, he did not aspire to a position for which God had not destined him. In fact, he was too great to wish to be aught but the herald and the servant of him who was to come.

**II. JOHN'S CLAIM.** A just and admirable modesty was not, indeed never is, inconsistent with a due assertion of position and duties assigned by God. He who knows what God has sent him into the world to do, will neither depreciate his own work nor envy another's. The claim made by John was very remarkable. He affirmed himself to be: 1. A fulfilment of prophecy. The circumstances of his birth and education, taken in conjunction with certain declarations of Old Testament Scripture, must have suggested to John that he held a place in the revealed counsels of eternal wisdom. 2. A voice. Often had God spoken to Israel. In John he spake yet again. To him it was given to utter by human lips the thoughts of the Divine mind. Not that this was a mechanical function; John's whole soul was inflamed with the grandeur and the burning necessity of that message of repentance which he was called upon to deliver to his fellow-countrymen. Nothing but the conviction that his voice was the expression of Divine thought, that he was summoning men in God's Name to a higher life of righteousness and faith, could have animated him to discharge his ministry with such amazing boldness. Nor could any other conviction have overcome the difficulty he must at first have felt in publicly witnessing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. 3. A herald, and one preparing the way of a great Successor. It was his to make straight the Lord's way. It was his to announce the Messiah's approach, and to direct the attention of Israel to the coming in lowly guise of Israel's King. It was his to subside into comparative insignificance, to withdraw from publicity, in order that he might make room for One whose presence would bring the realization of the brightest hopes and the most fervent prayers. It was his to administer the humbler baptism with water—the symbol of a better baptism to be conferred by Christ, even that with the Holy Spirit.

**APPLICATION.** 1. Learn the completeness and harmony of the Divine plan. The revelation of God proceeds upon an order which may be recognized both by the intellect and by the heart of man. The wisdom of the Eternal arranges that all preparation shall be made for the appearance of the world's Saviour; the morning star heralds the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. God's ways in grace are as regular and as orderly as his ways in providence. 2. Learn the dignity and preciousness of Immanuel. One so honourable as the Baptist yet deemed himself unworthy to serve the meek and lowly Jesus—to act as his meanest attendant. Lowly was his attitude, and reverent his words, when the Son of God drew near. Surely he, who was so regarded and so heralded, demands our homage and deserves our love.—T.

**Vers. 35—42.—Guests of Jesus.** Although our Lord had not, during any period of his ministry, a settled abode, a temporary home was provided for him, now in one place and anon in other, where he could rest and meditate, and where he could receive his friends. For Jesus was neither an ascetic nor a recluse; he did not disdain the tranquil pleasures of domestic retirement, nor did he withdraw himself from the fellowship of those whose nature he deigned to share. Of our Lord's social disposition this passage furnishes an illustration.

**I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO THIS INTERVIEW.** 1. The educational and spiritual preparation of these guests. Andrew and John were disciples of the forerunner, the Baptist. Like many of the susceptible and ardent spirits of the period, they had been attracted by John's remarkable and impressive personality, and by his stern and authoritative ministry. In the school of the herald they were prepared for the service of the King. 2. The emphatic testimony borne by the forerunner to the Lord. This testimony was undoubtedly intended to draw the attention of the two young men to him "who was to come;" and it is a proof of John's humility and disinterestedness that he should be content to hand over his disciples to One greater than himself. 3. The sacred wonder of the two, and their laudable desire for advanced teaching. It was a proof that they had profited by the lessons of their master John, when they evinced a yearning for the still higher society of Christ.

**II. THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE DIVINE HOST AND HIS GUESTS.** 1. On the part of the disciples, we observe modesty of demeanour in their silently following Jesus, and reverence of spirit and language in their inquiry, "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" All who repair to Christ in this temper and attitude may be assured of a kind reception. 2. For we remark on the part of Jesus the response of encouragement and invitation. Observing that the two disciples were too timid to address him first, he opened up the way for conversation; and, when they expressed, though indirectly, a desire to visit him, he gave a cordial invitation. 3. Part of a day was devoted to hallowed intercourse. The grace and condescension of the Lord are thus apparent from the very commencement of his ministry. We cannot doubt that he was already resolving upon methods of Messianic ministry, and was planning the means of evangelization afterwards adopted. And he foresaw that these two ardent young disciples were to become able ministers of his gospel to their fellow-men. This anticipation doubtless gave a colour to the conversation that took place during those memorable hours.

**III. THE RESULTS WHICH FOLLOWED THIS INTERVIEW.** Such a visit could not but be fruitful of much good. When natures so prepared by the Spirit of God came into contact with the Son of God, no wonder that the consequences were signal and precious. 1. The conviction was formed in the minds of the two guests that their Host was none other than the Christ foretold in Hebrew prophecy, and desired by devout and waiting expectant spirits. 2. The conviction which they formed they hastened to communicate to their kindred and companions. They had learned good news, and could not keep it to themselves. At once they became preachers of Christ, and their conduct was an earnest of their subsequent apostleship. 3. They seem to have lost no time in transferring themselves from the school and following of John, whose ministry was now drawing to a close, to the school and following of Jesus, whose official ministerial work was now beginning. What they saw and heard on this memorable day led them to wish to see and to hear yet more. And in following Christ they had the opportunity of satisfying their heart's desire.

**APPLICATION.** 1. The society of the Lord Jesus is still to be sought as the means of spiritual good. His direction is "Abide in me, and I in you." This is feasible even to us who see him not with the bodily eye. 2. Jesus ever welcomes to his society all who truly desire it, and especially the young and those with spiritual aspirations. None are rejected who approach him in a spirit of humility, of reverence, of faith. 3. To be much with Jesus is the best preparation for serving him. Those who would publish his love and grace must first make acquaintance with him, and allow his character, his ministry, his sacrifice, to produce their own impression upon the heart. As at the first, so now, his dearest friends become his most efficient servants.—T.

**Vers. 40—42.—A brother's love and service.** Little as we know of Andrew, that little presents him in a most interesting and attractive light. The record of his conduct upon the occasion of his attaching himself to Jesus is especially full of instruction and of inspiration. The opportunity which family relationships afford to spiritual usefulness, and the employment of the feelings peculiar to human kinship, are brought out in this brief narrative with exquisite beauty. We have revealed in this incident—

**I. THE IMPULSE OF A BROTHER'S HEART.** Andrew found in Jesus the Messiah for whom he was looking and hoping. Rejoicing in the great discovery, his earliest

impulse was to make those dearest to him partake his joy. He thought of his brother Simon—that noble, eager, affectionate nature, that came afterwards to be consecrated to the friendship and the service of the Christ. A brother's insight divined that news such as that he had to communicate would awaken emotions in Simon's breast similar to those enkindled in his own. Sympathy and love urged him to hasten to his brother, the companion of his boyhood and youth, the sharer of his interests and occupations. Love is never so admirable as when it aims unselfishly at another's good, and especially at his spiritual enlightenment and happiness. Christianity presses into its service all the beautiful emotions belonging to our humanity.

II. THE TIDINGS FROM A BROTHER'S LIPS. The words which Andrew addressed to his brother seem to have been few; but this brevity was the fit expression of the ardent affection of the speaker and the fit vehicle for tidings so momentous. Andrew's feelings would admit of no delay. His eager, almost blunt, communication must have awakened surprise in Simon's mind. "We have found the Messiah." Did brother ever convey to brother tidings so interesting, so heart-stirring? Surely we have here a lesson upon the duty we owe to those nearest akin and nearest in affection to ourselves. In the Church of Christ is room for such services—alas! how often neglected through either carelessness or reserve!

III. THE ACTION OF A BROTHER'S ENERGY. Andrew was not content simply to tell the news. He would have Simon see for himself who Jesus was. "He brought him to Jesus." In this record we have the principle of Christian missions condensed into a few words. It seems a small thing to have done, yet more than this man cannot do for his brother man. A happy exercise of Christian sympathy and enterprise. To wish our dear ones well is good; yet it is not enough. It is for us to exert ourselves to secure their welfare. And how could this end be promoted so surely as by bringing them to Jesus—under the influence of his sacred presence and his winning love?

IV. THE REWARD OF A BROTHER'S DEVOTION. The sympathy, benevolence, and brotherly friendship of Andrew were not in vain. When Simon was brought by Andrew to Jesus, Jesus looked upon him with favour, appreciated, by the exercise of his spiritual insight, the good qualities of the new disciple, designated him by an appropriate name, and implicitly predicted his future eminence and service. This was indeed a rich return!

"Who art thou, that wouldst grave thy name  
Thus deeply in a brother's heart?  
Look on this saint, and learn to frame  
Thy love-charm with true Christian art.  
"First seek thy Saviour out, and dwell  
Beneath the shadow of his roof,  
Till thou have scann'd his features well,  
And known him for the Christ by proof;  
"Then, potent with the spell of Heaven,  
Go, and thine erring brother gain,  
Entice him home to be forgiven,  
Till he, too, sees his Saviour plain."  
(Keble.)

T.

Ver. 41.—*The great discovery.* Universal interest and pleasure are connected with all striking discoveries; e.g. in geographical knowledge, in physical science, in the arts of life. A new possession, either material or intellectual, is thus acquired. But all discoveries pale before that described in the simple language of the text. To find Christ is better than to find a gold-mine, a continent, a faithful wife, a happy home.

I. THE PROCESS OF THIS DISCOVERY. There is here no chance, no accident, no caprice. There are involved: 1. *The seeking soul.* The soul that is satisfied with itself and its state is not in the way to the great discovery; but the soul that is conscious of destitution, ignorance, and sinfulness is in the right direction. The soul that feels how insufficient is the discovery and acquisition of earthly goods and human friends is prepared to appreciate a Divine revelation. 2. *The self-discovering Saviour.* It is often represented that the mere desire and aspiration of the soul is sufficient to

secure its highest good. But hunger is not enough to secure our satisfaction; there must be bread to correspond with, to supply, the want. So the heart may yearn to little purpose unless the Divine heart of the Saviour respond to the yearning. Now, Jesus is willing to be found, and, indeed, came to earth in order that in him the favour, fellowship, and life of God might be made accessible to man. From the beginning of his ministry he welcomed all who sought him. And still his promise is, "Seek, and ye shall find;" "Come unto me, . . . and ye shall find rest." 3. *The Spirit of God is the Divine Guide* that leads the soul to the Saviour. A Divine influence prompts the spiritual quest, sets the glorious Object of that quest before the vision, and urges to a fervent and immediate application for blessing.

II. **THE VALUE OF THIS DISCOVERY.** Christ is the Treasure hidden, the Pearl of price. 1. They who find him find the mind and heart of the God in whom "we live and move and have our being." As Simon and Nathanael soon found that the Rabbi of Nazareth was the Son of God; so many who have been prejudiced against Jesus have learned how unjust were their prejudices. Time has revealed to them the fulness from which they have received grace for grace. 2. They find in Christ supply for all their wants and satisfaction for all their cravings. He becomes to those who find him, not only Prophet, Priest, and King, but also Counsellor, Friend, and Brother.

III. **THE RESULT OF THIS DISCOVERY.** 1. *Joy.* Finding Christ is being found by Christ; and, as he rejoices over the lost ones who are found, so they rejoice in him whom to find is life eternal. 2. *Proclamation.* It is a discovery which the discoverer cannot keep to himself. In this narrative we observe the happy finders of the Messiah communicating to kindred and to friends their unspeakable happiness. The impulse of glowing benevolence urges to the spiritual ministry of compassion, and thus soul after soul is brought to enter upon that pursuit which is ever rewarded by success and satisfaction.—T.

Vers. 45—51.—*The candid disciple.* Nathanael is a person of whom we know but very little. That he was of Cana, that he was probably the same as Bartholomew, that, after the resurrection of Jesus, he was in company with Peter upon the Lake of Genesareth,—this is all we are told concerning him, except what we learn from this passage. Our chief interest in him, therefore, lies in his call to the discipleship of the Lord.

I. **MORAL PREPARATION FOR DISCIPLESHIP.** Like many of Christ's friends, Nathanael was disciplined and fitted beforehand for the new fellowship. 1. He was devout, meditative, and prayerful. It seems likely that, "under the fig tree," he was engaged in the study of the Scriptures and in prayer. 2. A true and spiritual, and not merely a nominal, a national, Israelite. There were many descended from Abraham who were not Abraham's children spiritually. This man was a true "prince with God"—one worthy of his privileges and his name. 3. Guileless; not indeed free from sin, but transparent in character—candid, open to the light, anxious to be holy and to find God. Such training as this was the best preparative for Christian discipleship.

II. **INTELLECTUAL PREJUDICE AGAINST DISCIPLESHIP.** This state of mind is not incompatible with that already described. Nathanael was not eager to welcome the new Teacher and Leader of men. Morally cultured though he was, he resented the supposition that the Messiah could spring out of a town so small, insignificant, and despised as Nazareth. His first inclination was to discredit the witness, and to smile at the sudden enthusiasm of his friend Andrew. And in this Nathanael did but anticipate the action of the Jews, who were offended at what they deemed the weakness of the cross, and of the Gentiles, who were offended at what they deemed its folly. It is not only bad men whose prejudices keep them from Christ; good men have their prejudices—prejudices not to be overcome by reasoning, but which will yield to the demonstration of personal experience.

III. **DECISIVE MEANS BRINGING ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP.** Several steps are here taken, which deserve to be carefully followed. 1. The mediation and testimony of a friend. 2. The invitation to a personal interview with Jesus, accepted as readily as it was wisely suggested. 3. The evident insight possessed by Jesus into human character. He needed not that any man should tell him; he knew immediately what was the character of him who was introduced to him. 4. The revelation of the man's heart to himself by the authority of the Divine Rabbi. Others standing by could not fathom

all the depths of this interview and conversation. But Jesus knew all, and Nathanael felt the omniscience of the Being he now began to understand.

**IV. BOLD AVOWAL OF DISCIPLESHIP.** The process in the scholar's mind was swift, but not rash or unwarranted. His confession was full and rich, but not extravagant. To Nathanael, over whose mind there flashed a flood of revelation, Jesus was (1) the Rabbi, (2) the Son of God, (3) the King of Israel. This witness seems incapable of expansion. All his after-life was to Nathanael an opportunity for filling up the outline which his faith thus sketched in a few bold strokes. He never went beyond these first convictions.

**V. RECOMPENSE OF DISCIPLESHIP.** Such spiritual sympathy, such courageous confession, was not unrewarded. In response, the Messiah: 1. Accepted the new and ardent pupil as one of his own attached and privileged companions. 2. Assured him of progressive illumination and experience. 3. Promised him participation in the glorious vision of the future, in the celestial exaltation of the Son of man.—T.

**Ver. 46.—“Come and see!”** This was the proper counsel for Philip to give to Nathanael, and for every true friend to give to the man whose mind is possessed with incredulity or with prejudice regarding Christ and his claims. Reasoning is very well; but an appeal to personal experience is in many cases far better. Many a man will draw a just inference for himself, which he will not allow another man to draw for him. In giving this advice Philip showed his knowledge of human nature.

**I. COME AND SEE WHAT CHRIST IS.** There are many persons who are indifferent to the Saviour only because they do not know him—because he is to them nothing but a name. 1. Study the record of his earthly ministry, and you will find that his character and life possess a peerless interest. Few have really read and studied the four Gospels without feeling themselves brought into contact with a Being altogether unrivalled in human history for qualities of the spiritual nature, for profundity of moral teaching, for self-sacrificing benevolence. And many have, by such study, been brought under a spell for which no ordinary principles could account, and have felt, not only that no personage in human history can rank with Christ, but that none can even be compared with him. 2. Ponder the character, the claims, the acknowledged work, of Christ, and you will be convinced of his Divine nature and authority. Men who judge of him by hearsay, or by their own preconceptions, may think of Jesus as of an ordinary man; but this is not the case with those who “come and see,” who allow him to make his own impression upon their minds. Such are found exclaiming, with the officers, “Never man spake like this Man!” with the disciples, “What manner of Man is this!” with Peter, “Thou art the Christ!” with this very Nathanael, to whom the words of the text were addressed, “Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel!” with the centurion at the Crucifixion, “Truly this was a righteous Man, this was the Son of God!”

**II. COME AND SEE WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE.** 1. This test—a very reasonable one—may be applied in individual cases. What did Christ effect for Saul of Tarsus? Did he not change him from a zealous and narrow formalist into a man whose name has become the synonym for spirituality of religion, for breadth and catholicity of doctrine, for grandeur of plan and of hope with regard to this ransomed humanity? Did he not find Augustine a wilful and pleasure-seeking young man, who almost broke a pious mother's heart? and did he not transform him into a penitent, a saint, a mighty theologian, a holy power in the realm of human thought? What did Christ do for Luther? He visited him when he was depressed and hopeless because of the conscience of sin, spoke to him the word of peace, called and strengthened him to become the Reformer of half Christendom, the founder of an epoch of light and liberty for mankind. Such instances, to be found in the annals of the illustrious and influential among men, might be multiplied. But it is not only over the great and famous that the Divine Jesus has exercised his power. Among the poorest, the meanest, the feeblest, nay, the vilest, he has proved himself to be the Friend of sinners and the Brother of man. There is no circle of society in any Christian land where evidences of this kind do not abound. You need not go far to see what the Lord Christ can do; this you may learn at your own doors, and every day. 2. But the educated and well-informed have within their reach a wider range of proof. The history of Christendom

is written in a vast, an open book—a book which the intelligent, and those capable of taking a wide survey of human affairs, are at liberty to read. Secular historians have traced the influence of Christianity upon society, upon the code of morals, upon slavery, upon war, upon the position of woman in society, upon the education of the young, upon the treatment of the poor, the sick, the afflicted. No doubt, exaggeration has often distinguished the treatment of these matters by Christian advocates. Yet, in all fairness and candour, it must be admitted that a contrast between unchristian and Christian society yields results immensely in favour of our religion. Christ has been the chief Benefactor of the human race, has done more than any beside to ameliorate and to improve the conditions and to brighten the prospects of mankind.

III. COME AND SEE WHAT CHRIST WILL DO FOR YOU. This is not a matter of speculation, but of practical moment and interest. It is well to form a just estimate of the character, the mission, the work, of the Son of God. But it is better to take the benefit which he offers to every believing hearer of his gospel. 1. See whether he can give you peace of conscience, by securing to you the pardon of sin, and acceptance with the God against whom you have sinned. This he professes to do; this multitudes will assure you he has done for them. If this is with you an urgent need, will it not be reasonable to put Christ to that test of experience to which he invites you? 2. See whether he can supply you with the highest law and the most sacred motive for the moral life. All human standards are imperfect, and no human principle is sufficient to ensure obedience. What no other can offer, the Saviour claims to impart, and it is reasonable to test his ability and his willingness to fulfil his promises. 3. See whether his fellowship and friendship can uphold and cheer you amidst the sorrows, temptations, and uncertainties of this earthly life. He says, "My grace is sufficient for you." Verify the assertion in your own experience. If he cannot supply this want, certain it is that none else can do so. 4. See whether the Lord Christ can vanquish death for you, and give you the assurance of a blessed immortality. Apart from him, the future is very dark; try his power to illumine that darkness with rays of heavenly light.

APPLICATION. 1. Defenders and promulgators of Christianity will do well to address to their fellow-men the invitation Philip addressed to Nathanael. If they cannot always answer men's cavils and objections, and satisfy men's intellectual difficulties, they can bring men face to face with Christ himself, and leave the interview to produce its own effects. Let men be encouraged to come, to see, and to judge for themselves. 2. The undecided hearers of the gospel may well accept the challenge here given. Why should they shrink from it? It is an opportunity which should not be neglected, an invitation which should not be refused.—T.

Ver. 10.—*The unrecognized Creator.* We have here three facts briefly stated in the history of our Lord, which are full of interest and significance.

I. HIS APPEARANCE IN THIS WORLD. This involves: 1. *The greatest wonder.* "He was in the world." But was he not ever in the world since its creation? Yes; in its laws, order, and beauty; in its conscience, reason, and religion; by his Word, Spirit, and revelations. But these words announce his special presence. He was in the world as one of its inhabitants, under its laws and necessities, in human nature, as "the Word made flesh." This is most wonderful. Think, who was he? More than human, else his having been in the world would not be a matter of surprise. He was the Son of God—the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God; therefore God was in the world in human form. This is the most wonderful fact in the history of this world, and, perhaps, in that of any other. So wonderful that it has engaged the interest and attention of good men of all ages, and even of angels. One element of its wonder is its mysteriousness and apparent impossibility. We are ready to ask with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" But, although wonderful and mysterious, "he was in the world." 2. *The greatest condescension.* We see this when we consider who he was, and what is the world in which he was. Compared with his mansion, it is but a poor cot. In size it is but a particle of dust; in glory, but a fitting ray of the creative sun. And when we look at it from a moral point of view, as fallen, our estimate is much lower still—a territory in rebellion, a valley of dry bones, full of desolation, disease, and death. It would be a great condescension in an angel to come and live in such a world, but how much greater in *him* who is the Lord of angels! It



would be great condescension on his part to look even with any delight on such a world as ours, but infinitely more to live in it, and live under the poorest and most harassing conditions: not in a palace, rolling in wealth and luxury, but born in a stable; wandering from place to place, weary and homeless; poorer than the foxes of the field. What a condescension! 3. *The greatest love.* No other principle will account for the wonderful fact but love. For in the world there were no attractions for him. In a moral sense its sceneries were frightful, its air pestilential, and its inhabitants not merely unfriendly but hostile—hostile to each other, and bitterly hostile to him their Saviour. In this sense the world was to him repelling. But that which was repelling to his holiness, simply considered, was attractive to his love and mercy. Sin is repelling to holiness; but the distress and danger of sinners in consequence are mighty attractions to Divine pity. Such is the wrecked ship to the lifeboat crew; such are the wounded soldiers on the battle-field to the philanthropic heart, and such was this ruined world to infinite love. So that he was in it. 4. *The greatest importance.* That he was in the world. So important, that it was foretold by prophets, foreshadowed by priests, kept before the world by Divine ritualism, expected by the world from time to time; and nothing would satisfy the wants and cravings of human nature but the appearance of God among men. So that the fact of his having been in the world is most important to truth—to the Divine fidelity as well as to human want and happiness. The absence of all besides would be of infinitely less consequence than his. If he had not been in the world, the foundation-stone of the Divine temple would be wanting. The central fact of the kingdom of God on earth would be absent, and the world itself could not stand. 5. *The greatest benefit and honour to the world.* (1) *The greatest benefit.* The benefit which the world has derived is salvation. This could not be effected without his incarnate life: nothing else would answer the purpose. Hence, what a benefit to the world that he was in it! (2) *The greatest honour.* This was the greatest honour ever conferred on the world. And is there any other world which has been so honoured? What is ours compared with many of God's worlds? It is but as Bethlehem-Ephrata—"the least among the thousands of Judah." And does the least attract him? Does he specially help the most helpless, the weakest, the most miserable, and leave the strong to some extent to themselves? Many a spot is sacred as the birthplace or residence of a great man—of great poet or statesman; his presence has honoured the place and made it sacred. If so, is not this world holy and sacred to us; for he was in it? This world will ever be remembered and distinguished as the world in which God was in human flesh. In the great conflagration, will it be burnt? or will it be the last? Or, if some of it shall perish, shall not Bethlehem, Gethsemane, and Calvary be preserved, as parts of the new earth, in commemoration of the great fact that he was in the world? 6. *This fact is well attested.* Was he really in the world? In answer to this question there is a most emphatic "Yes" coming from heaven and earth. The life of Christ on earth is an incontrovertible fact, and nothing can explain it but that he really was what he himself claimed to be, and what his friends and even his foes represented him to be: the Son of God—God manifested in the flesh. "He was in the world." For proof of this we are not entirely dependent on the distant past, for on "the sands of time" we find footprints which no one but an incarnate God could make. He has left behind him glorious and undeniable proofs of his having been here, in the gracious system of redemption and its ever-growing and mighty effects in the moral restoration of the world.

II. THE CREATION OF THE WORLD BY HIM. "And the world was made by him." This implies: 1. *His Divinity.* If he made the world, he was God, for creative power is the sole prerogative of Divinity. "The world was made," etc. This is saying much; but, after all, it is saying but little of him of whom it was previously said that "all things were created by him," etc. It is not much to say that he created a drop after saying that he had created the ocean. Here is a descent from the whole to a very small part. But still, in connection with the previous fact that he was in the world, it is quite natural to be reminded that the world was made by him. 2. *That he had a perfect right to come as he did into the world.* For "the world was made by him." Thus he was in his own world absolutely. Although he had let it to the children of men as his tenants, yet he reserved the right to visit when and how he pleased. And when he came he was not an intruder, not an infringer of any right, nor a transgressor

of any law; for "the world was made," etc. 3. *This fact accounts to some extent for his visit.* In every world, as the production of his creative power and wisdom, he takes the deepest interest, and he is responsible for all the possible results of its existence, and all its possible requirements were taken into account when made, and doubtless his incarnate life in this world was involved in its creation. We find that he felt a deep interest in this world, and took an early delight in the visit, being in the original plan. Not every world is made on this plan; but such was the plan of our world, that it was necessary, in "the fulness of time," for God to be manifested in the flesh, and live for a short time on earth as one of its tenants. God will carry out the original plan of every world he made at any cost, though it may involve the greatest condescension and sacrifice.

III. HIS UNRECOGNITION BY THE WORLD. "And the world knew him not." This is not asserted of the material world, for this knew him; all its laws, elements, and forces knew him at once, and signified their recognition. But it is sadly true of the world's inhabitants. "They knew him not." This indicates: 1. *Great guilt.* They ought to know him; for "he was in the world"—in their nature and in their midst. They could not plead distance and disadvantages of recognition. They ought to know him; "the world was made by him;" and before their very eyes he proved the authorship beyond any doubt, by touching its laws and forces, and they were pliant to his touch, his word, and even to his will. The world of matter knew him, but that of intelligence, etc., which ought to know him, knew him not. He came to be known—gave every opportunity to this world to know him; but in spite of all, "the world knew him not." 2. *Great moral perversion.* There is great neglect, great inattention, terrible blindness, and wilful resistance. It was not that they could not, but they would not. 3. *A great loss.* For he was their Creator and Friend, their Messiah and Redeemer. He was in the world to save and bless it. The condition on which his blessings could be imparted and appropriated was to know and accept him. The condition was disregarded and the blessings lost. This is the greatest loss ever sustained by the world, the greatest blunder the world ever committed, the greatest oversight,—to let its incarnate Creator and Redeemer be in it unknown and unrecognized. 4. *This is not exceptional in the history of the world.* How many of the world's greatest benefactors have been unrecognized by the age in which they lived, and which they benefited! But this is not to be wondered at—the world began badly with its best and greatest Friend. This was the fate of the Son of God. If he had a tombstone, it could be appropriately written on it, "He was in the world," etc. This is true of all who live before, above, and for their age. It takes ages in such a world as this to know them fully.

LESSONS. 1. *That the brightest fact in the history of this world is that God was in it in the flesh.* Let it be well published and believed; it is full of significance, comfort, and hope. 2. *It is one of the blackest spots in the character of the world, that it left him unrecognized when here.* This led to terrible results—the Crucifixion, etc. 3. *The world should be sorry for not recognizing him—should make an ample apology.* The world has made an apology, but not to the extent it ought to yet. It is a source of great comfort that he did not leave in anger, but is willing and ready to receive our apology in repentance and sorrow. 4. *While we blame the world for its unrecognized of the Son of God, let us beware lest we commit the same sin.* He is in the world now. Do we really know him? and to what extent?—B. T.

Vers. 11, 12.—*The rejected and received Saviour.* These words bring under our notice a most interesting subject—the great subject of the first fifteen verses of this chapter, viz. the coming of the Son of God, the manifestation of the Eternal Word in the flesh. We have here one of the peculiar aspects of his coming in order to carry out the great scheme of human redemption. We have Jesus here—

I. AS COME TO HIS OWN. 1. *This is a special coming.* He was in the world before and after his Incarnation. But here we have a special description of his manifestation. "He came." He had to do with the Jewish nation for ages, but no previous movement of his could be accurately described in this language. He came now physically, personally, and visibly. 2. *This is a special coming to his own.* His own land—the land of Palestine; his own people—the Jewish nation. He came to the world at large, but came through a particular locality. He came to humanity generally, but came through

a particular nation. This was a necessity, and according to pre-arrangement. The Jewish nation were his own people: (1) By a *Divine and sovereign choice*. They were chosen out of the nations of the earth to be the recipients of God's special revelations of his will, the objects of his special care and protection, and the special medium of his great redemptive thoughts and purposes. There was a mutual engagement. (2) By a *special covenant*. God entered into a covenant with them by which they were his people, to obey and serve him; and he was their God, to bless and save them. (3) By *special promises*. The central one of which was the promise of the Messiah and the blessings of his reign. This promise permeated every fibre of their constitution, and became the soul of their national and religious life. (4) By a *special training*. They were divinely disciplined for ages for his advent. They were taught to expect him, and trained to receive him, and, under this training, their expectation grew into a passion. The Messianic idea was fostered among them by a long and careful training, by promises, by the occasional appearance of "the Angel of Jehovah," who was doubtless no other than the Eternal Word himself. They were trained by special privileges, revelations, and protection; by an economy of ceremonial rites and sacrifices, which all pointed to the Messiah as coming. In the light of these facts he was their own Messiah, and they were his own people; and it was necessary, as well as natural, that he should come to his own. There was a special attraction and affinity felt on his part, and there ought to be on theirs. Had he appeared in any other land than that of Israel, or identified himself with any other nation than the Jewish, he would not have come according to the volume of the book written of him. But there were the most cogent reasons, the fittest propriety, and the most absolute necessity that he should come to his own, and he came. 3. *This was a special coming to all his own*. Not to some, but to all. Not to a favoured class, but to all classes—rich and poor, learned and unlearned. The unlearned and poor being the large majority of the nation as well as the world, he identified himself rather with them; for he could reach the higher classes better from below, than the lower classes from above. He taught all without distinction, offered the blessings of his coming to all without the least partiality, and invited all to his kingdom by the same road, viz. repentance and faith.

II. AS REJECTED BY THE MAJORITY. "And his own received him not." A few received him; but they were exceptions, and they received him individually, not nationally; as sinners and aliens, and not as his own. So complete was the rejection that it is a sad truth, "his own received him not." Their rejection of him: 1. *Was a sad dereliction of duty*. A duty they owed to their God and Defender; a duty most sacred, important, and obligatory. A duty for the performance of which they had been chiefly chosen, specially blessed, preserved, and prepared for ages; but when the time came, they sadly failed to perform it. "His own received him not." 2. *Was most inexcusable*. It is true that they knew him not to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah. This is stated by the apostle. But this is not a legitimate excuse; they ought to know him. They had the most ample advantages; they were familiar with his portraits as drawn by the prophets, and he exactly corresponded. His holy character, his mighty deeds, and his Divine kindness were well known, and even confessed by them. They had the mightiest proofs of his Messiahship and Divinity. So that they had no excuse for their ignorance, and consequently no excuse for their rejection. 3. *Was cruelly ungrateful*. Ingratitude is too mild a term to describe their conduct. It was cruel. Think who he was—the Son of God, the Prince of Life, their rightful King, their promised and long-expected Messiah, come to them all the way from heaven, not on a message of vengeance as might be expected, but on a message of peace and universal good will, to fulfil his gracious engagement and carry out the Divine purposes of redeeming grace. Leaving out the graver charge of his crucifixion, his rejection was cruelly ungrateful and ungratefully cruel. "His own received him not." 4. *Was most fatal to them*. They rejected their best and only Friend and Deliverer, who had most benevolently come to warn and save them—come for the last time, and their rejection of him was the only thing that could deliver them socially and spiritually; but "his own received him not." This proved fatal to them. There was nothing left but national dissolution and ruin, and that was soon the case; and they are the victims of their own conduct to this day. To reject Jesus is ultimately fatal to nations as well as to individuals. 5. *Was most discouraging to him*. To be rejected, and to be rejected by his

own—by those who it might be expected would receive him with untold enthusiasm. Better be rejected by strangers and spurned by professed foes,—this would be expected; but to be rejected by his own is apparently more than he can bear. And not satisfied with leaving him an outcast in his own world, they banish him hence by a cruel death. What will he do? Will he be disheartened, leave with disgust, and hurl on the world the thunderbolts of vengeance? No; but stands his ground, and tries his fortune among strangers, according to ancient prophecy, “He shall not fail, nor be discouraged,” etc.

III. AS RECEIVED BY SOME. “But as many as received him,” etc. He was received by a minority—a small but noble minority. With regard to the few who received him we see: 1. *The independency and courage of their conduct.* They received him, though rejected by the majority, which included the most educated and influential. It is one thing to swim with the tide, but another to swim against it. It is easy to go with the popular current, but difficult to go against it. This requires a great independency of action and decision of character. Those who received Jesus at this time did this—they received “the Despised and Rejected of men.” They accepted the Stone rejected, and rejected of *the builders*. This involved admirable independency of conduct and courage of conviction. 2. *The reward of their conduct.* “But as many as received him, to them gave he power,” etc. (1) *The closest relationship to God.* His children: children first, then sons; the seed first, then the ripe fruit. (2) *The highest honour that men can enjoy.* Children of God. (3) *This is the gift of Christ.* “To them gave he power,” etc. This word means more than power; it means right as well—power first, then right. Men had neither to sonship, but Christ gave both. The fact is patent—he gave the power. The title is good—he gave the right. (4) *This is the gift of Christ* consequent upon receiving him. “But as many as received him, to them,” etc. And to none else. But to as many as received him he gave the power. There was not a single failure, not a single exception. They received the Son of God, and became themselves the children of God in consequence. They were not disappointed, but had reasons to be more than satisfied with their choice, and more than proud of their unexpected and Divine fortune. If Jesus were disappointed in his own, those who received him were not disappointed in Jesus—only on the best side; for “to them gave he power,” etc. 3. *The explanation of their conduct.* How did they receive him while the majority rejected him? How came they possessed of such a high honour—to become the children of God? The answer is, “They believed on his Name.” It was by faith. We see: (1) *The discerning power of faith.* Faith has a discerning power; it can see through the visible to the invisible, through the immediate present to the distant future. In this instance, faith saw through the outward the inward, through the physical it saw the Divine; through the outward humiliation and poverty it discovered a Divine presence. In “the Man of sorrows” faith saw the Son of God, and in “the Despised and Rejected of men” the Saviour of the world. (2) *The receptive power of faith.* Jesus was received by faith. Faith saw, recognized, and consequently received, him as the Messiah. God speaks, faith listens; God offers, faith accepts. (3) *The regenerative and transforming power of faith.* “They became the sons of God.” How? By the given power of Jesus in connection with faith. Christ gave himself as a Divine Seed; faith received, appropriated, and nursed him so as to result in a Divine regeneration and birth. Faith transforms its object into its possessor; so that the believer in the Son of God becomes the son of God himself. This is a Divine process from beginning to end, in which faith—a Divine gift—plays a prominent part. (4) *Faith in Christ produced the same result in all.* “As many as received him,” etc. No matter as to position, education, or character.

CONCLUSIONS. 1. *The minority are often right, and the majority wrong.* It was so on the plain of Dura, in Babylon, and so here. 2. *The minority, generally, are the first to accept great truths; the majority reject them.* Think of scientific, reforming and redemptive truths. The Jewish nation rejected the Saviour; a few received him. 3. *It is better to be with the minority when right, than with the majority when wrong.* They have truth and right, and will ultimately win all to their way of thinking. The few that received Jesus are fast gaining ground. The Saviour of the minority will soon be the Saviour of all. 4. *We should be very thankful to the minority for receiving the Saviour.* Humanly speaking, they saved the world from

eternal disgrace and ruin—from sharing the fate of those who rejected him. **5.** *He should be infinitely more thankful to the Saviour that he did not leave the world in disgust and vengeance when rejected by his own.* But inspired by infinite love, he turned his face to the world at large, stood by the minority, and the minority stood by him. The river of God's eternal purposes cannot be ultimately checked. If checked in one direction, it will take another, and the result will be more glorious. Christ comes to us every day. Do we receive him? Our obligations are infinite.—B. T.

Ver. 18.—*The Divine Revealer.* We have here—

**I. CHRIST AS THE REVEALER OF GOD.** “He hath declared him.” **1.** *He brought much that was known of God into a clearer light.* In this respect his revelation (1) was confirmative, confirming people in their notions of God as far as they were right. (2) It was corrective—correcting the false notions of heathenism and Judaism, so that the God of Christ is very different from and far superior to that of the heathen and even that of the Jews. **2.** *He revealed much that was new, which was not known before.* Such as: (1) *The spirituality of God.* (2) *His fatherhood.* (3) *His gracious will to fallen humanity* in the great scheme of redemption which Christ came, not only to reveal, but to work out in his Divine-human life and death. (4) *The way of access to and reconciliation with God.* (5) *His spiritual reign in his people on earth, and they with and in him for ever in heaven.*

**II. CHRIST AS A PERFECT REVEALER OF GOD.** “He hath declared him.” **1.** *Perfect in the character of his knowledge.* (1) *His knowledge was direct.* Not borrowed or derived; but as the Son of God, and God himself, it was relationally direct and personally intuitive. He was not only the Channel, but the Fountain. (2) *His knowledge was absolute and exact.* In this respect he was the truth itself. He could speak, not about something he had seen some time, but about what was actually present to him then; was not dependent upon memory and association, but on his present vision and personal consciousness. (3) *His knowledge was full, covering his subject* in all its vastness and meaning, its fathomless depths, its dizzy heights, and boundless breadth. **2.** *Perfect in his revealing qualifications.* In a perfect revealer of God to man there must be: (1) *Oneness of nature* with both parties. Mere man or angel would be deficient. But Christ is perfectly qualified in this respect, being the Son of God and the Son of man, the Eternal Word which was God, but which “became flesh.” An inferior mind cannot interpret a superior one. The bed of a brook cannot contain the Amazon. Christ being equal with God, and having assumed human nature, was in a position to reveal God perfectly to the human race; being God-Man, he could speak of God as man to men, in their nature and language. (2) *Intimate fellowship* with both parties. Christ was in the bosom of the Father—a position of the most intimate fellowship; and not merely “he became flesh,” but also “dwelt among us,” lived in the closest fellowship with the human family, and was most intimately acquainted with all their wants, weaknesses, peculiarities, and difficulties. (3) *Thorough sympathy* with both parties. This Jesus pre-eminently possessed. Being “the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father”—a position, not merely of the closest fellowship, but also of tenderest affection and mutual sympathy—his heart and will were tenderly sympathetic with the heart of God, and with the saving purposes of his love with regard to the human family. And as the “Word made flesh,” he was in tenderest sympathy with mankind—with all their spiritual wants and aspirations; the faintest sigh for God would find in him a most ready and helpful response. **3.** *Perfect in his mode of revelation.* Think of: (1) *Its clearness.* It is clearly simple and simply clear, so that a child can understand it, and the blind almost see it. He would talk of God with the same ease and simplicity as he would talk of an object really present to him. (2) *Its suggestiveness.* It stirs up the latent aspirations and powers of man to seek for and receive the knowledge of God. (3) *The prominence he gave to his subject.* He declared God in all he said, kept him continually before the minds of his hearers; he kept himself in the background, and, as a Teacher, made himself of no reputation, that God his Father and our Father might be known. (4) *Its exemplification.* He declared God, not only by precept, but by example. He used homely illustrations from nature, but found the homeliest illustration of God in his own Person and life, so that he could say, “He that hath seen me,” etc. And he shirked not even from dying in order to declare God, so that in his

tragic death on the cross we have the most striking and convincing illustration of the love of God to a guilty world. 4. *Perfect in the scope of his revelation.* "He declared God"—as much as God wished and man required. Less would not do; more would be unnecessary and perhaps injurious. While curiosity is not satisfied, the wants of faith are met; so that God can now be known, "which is life eternal."

III. CHRIST AS THE ONLY PERFECT REVEALER OF GOD. "No man hath seen God," etc. 1. *To declare God fully he must be seen.* A full vision of him no man ever had, not even Moses, therefore could not fully declare him. Man's knowledge of God at best is limited and imperfect, and therefore incapable of being the medium of the full and essential revelation of God to the world. 2. *Christ alone saw God, and he is the only perfect Revealer of him.* His position is unique. He stands alone. He occupied a position in relation to God which no other one could occupy—"the Only Begotten," etc. 3. *His revelation is infinitely valuable.* Because: (1) *Supremely important.* All knowledge is valuable, but, compared with the knowledge of God, every other knowledge falls into insignificance. Our eternal well-being hangs upon it. (2) *Most reliable.* It comes from the highest source, through the highest and most suitable medium, and in the most intelligible and convincing manner. (3) *It is most rare.* It is a revelation which we could never get in any other way or from any other source—a revelation which God alone could give, and could only give through his Son.

LESSONS. 1. *We should hold Jesus in the highest esteem as the Revealer of God to us.* No one else could reveal him as he did. We should magnify his grace in making known to us, at an infinite sacrifice, his Father's character, will, and purposes. 2. *The gospel is an absolute truth.* For what is it but the Son's revelation of the Father?—what he had seen and heard and experienced of him, and been sent to declare: his gracious purposes of grace towards the fallen human family? 3. *As such the gospel should be accepted in implicit faith and burning gratitude.* To reject is the greatest sin, to receive is the most urgent duty. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," etc.—B. T.

Vers. 19-23.—*The Jewish deputation and the Baptist.* Notice—

I. THE DEPUTATION'S QUESTION. "Who art thou?" This implies: 1. *That a spirit of inquiry had been awakened.* Whether from curiosity, officialism, or jealousy, it was there. It is better to be questioned from any motive than not to be questioned at all. It is better for the questioners themselves. That is a very dull age or person that asks no questions. Asking is the condition of receiving. It is better for the one questioned, especially if he be a public man—a teacher with a truth, or a herald with a message. It proves that his presence and efforts awake attention. This was the case with the Baptist now. It gladdened his heart that a deputation came and questioned him. It proved that his voice had begun to stir the land and awake the spirit of inquiry. 2. *That there was a prevalent expectation at the time for the appearance of a great personage.* Some expecting the Messiah, some Elijah, some the prophet, and all expecting some great one to appear. Time somehow had reached its fulness; it had been in travail for some time, and a birth was naturally expected. Ancient prophecy also nursed the expectation, and there was a deeply felt need for the fulfilment and for the appearance of a Deliverer. There is a close connection between want and expectation, and between both and inquiry. So that when the Baptist began to burn in the wilderness, the spirit of the age soon caught the flame, and the country was ablaze with inquiry from different motives. 3. *A high compliment is paid to John and his ministry, whether meant or not.* Especially by the first form of the inquiry, "Art thou the Christ?" No one would ask a taper, "Art thou the sun?" but one would be tempted to ask the question of the moon or the morning star. John would doubtless be satisfied with the simple question, "Who art thou?" and drop it there and listen to the reply; for how many come and go and act on the stage of time without exciting the simple question, "Who art thou?" But John succeeded soon in eliciting this question, not from the thoughtless crowd, but from the mental and moral princes of the nation, and they ask him, "Art thou the Christ?" John was such a shining light that it was pardonable to mistake him for a moment for the Light of the world. The herald partook so much of the majesty of the coming King that it was natural to suspect that he might be the King himself. All this was befitting and natural. 4. *Great persistency and demand*

*in their inquiry.* They ask in every shape and form, and ask again and again; and in this they are worthy of imitation by all inquirers for truth. If your first question fails, ask again and again. How many have not been admitted to the temple of truth and the heaven of life because they only timidly knocked at the door once and then ran away! But this deputation were persistent and demanding. And in this they were neither wrong, intrusive, nor unwelcome. The ministry of John was such as to deserve and demand inquiry. The public had a right to demand his testimonials, and he was ready to furnish them. Truth suffers not by inquiry, but gains. This inquiry in its persistency and demand was as pleasing to John as it ought to be profitable to the deputation. 5. *The inquiry is made of the proper party.* Many ask for information everywhere but where they are likely to get it. They try to gather knowledge of a person of everybody but of the person himself. They try to find a risen Saviour in an empty grave, find the stars in the day, and the sun in the night. But this deputation act wisely and intelligently in their search for knowledge concerning John by coming to John himself, and asking him, "Who art thou?" And who was so likely to know and reply? If you want water, go to the fountain. If you want to know something about the rose, do not go to the oak or even the lily, but go to the rose itself; look at its delicate beauty, and inhale its sweet perfume. If you want truth, go to him who is the Truth. Do not accept things at second hand when you can get them new and fresh. So far as the formality of this inquiry goes, it is wise and intelligent.

II. JOHN'S ANSWER. *Negatively.* To the form of the inquiry which implied that he might be the Christ, Elijah, or the prophet, he gave a firm denial. This proves his strict honesty as an herald. The temptation would be too strong for an impostor or an ambitious upstart; he would likely reply affirmatively or evasively. These are questions which no one but John had to answer. His position was unique. He had strong individuality and transparent honesty. He would be no other than himself. His only ambition was to occupy his own place, and work out his own mission in life. *Affirmatively.* He was glad to deny in order to affirm; to say something about himself in order to introduce the great subject of his mission—the coming Messiah. He refers to himself as a subject of ancient prophecy, and therefore a divinely appointed herald (Isa. xl.). "Now, I am that voice." We have here: 1. *The import of his mission.* "Make straight the way of the Lord." This implies: (1) *That the Lord was coming.* He was coming in his Son—their long-expected Messiah. He was close at hand; in fact, in their midst, although they knew him not. (2) *That his way had become crooked.* The way of the Lord, as opened by himself through Moses, was straight, leading directly to the Messiah; but they had made it crooked and uneven with their traditions and wicked conduct. (3) *That it should be immediately straightened.* This was their solemn duty, and this they were called to do by suitable preparation—by repentance, by a radical reformation and inward cleansing. The King was at hand, and the way should be worthy of the distinguished traveller. Let every barrier to the progress of his chariot be removed; and, that his march may be triumphant and men be blessed, his way should be straightened. 2. *His characteristics as a messenger.* In addition to those indicated, we have: (1) *Mysteriousness.* "The voice." He was a mystery to himself as well as to others. Born and bred in the desert, holding closer communion with heaven than with earth, with God than with men, with ancient prophets and seers than with his own family, having dreams from early youth of a Divine mission which suddenly burst out into a voice like a peal of thunder upon the wilderness, people listened, wondered, and were stirred to inquiry; and in this whirlwind of excitement he was half a mystery to himself as well as to others. (2) *Self-obliviousness and devotion to his mission.* As if he were to say, "You have suspected me of being the Christ, Elijah, or the prophet: I am neither, only the voice of one crying," etc. The voice is that of some one; but never mind that some one, but attend to the voice and its contents: your Messiah is in it." With John it was not the messenger, but the mission; not the herald, but the coming King. And it should ever be so. The minister is but the voice—the herald of the King, the aural expression of Divine thought, to be heard rather than seen. (3) *There is a striking adaptation.* His work was crying, and he was the voice. He was a herald with a Divine message, and he had a voice to publish it. We should not grumble because we have not some gifts, if we have the necessary gifts for our special calling; if we have not, we have made a mistake. When our land was a moral

wilderness, God's old pioneering heralds had voices like thunder. Now the wilderness to a great extent is transformed into a garden, and the voice becomes naturally more suppressed. The Baptist was a special herald with a special message in the world's wilderness, and he had a voice like a trumpet. (4) *Awful loneliness*. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." Here is a vast wilderness, and only one crying in it. John was literally so, and morally to a greater extent. He had scarcely any one to sympathize with him, no responsive voice but the echo of his, no inspiration but that from within and from above. The Messiah he heralded was personally unknown to him. Great reformatations have commenced with a few—with one—and that one alone bearing a lonely torch through a scene of dense darkness. Let those who labour almost alone in foreign lands remember the lonely crier of the Judæan wilderness, the sources of his inspiration, and the ultimate results. (5) *Terrible earnestness*. "The voice of one crying." Not moaning, or muttering, or whispering, but crying. John was terribly earnest. His message burned like fire in his soul, quivered on his lips, and thundered forth in his voice. His whole being was merged into speech—his head and feet, his face, his eyes, especially his trumpet-voice, and even his strange garment spoke; so that he could not give a better account of himself than by saying, "I am the voice." He almost felt all voice. And it should ever be so. The observer should be all eyes, the listener all ears, but the herald all voice. Let the preacher be all mind in the study, but all voice in the pulpit. (6) *Great power and effect*. There is a great power in a voice, even the mere sound of material forces—the peals of the thunder, the sweeping blast of the storm, the mighty tones of the ocean, or the terrible roar of the cataract; but what is all this sound to the human voice in its various cadences and modulations, as the expression of thought, the flaming chariot of passion and enthusiasm, and the stately vehicle of intelligence? In the thunder and the storm matter only speaks; but in the human voice mind speaks; and in that of a Divine herald God himself speaks. So that in the voice of John could be heard the want of the world and the will of God. The thunder is not much without the lightning. The Baptist had a message of lightning and a voice of thunder, so that it was very powerful and effective. Its first notes were stern and terrible as he came in contact with the awful hypocrisy, infidelity, and vice of the age. Then his voice burst forth into thunders of invective and whirlwinds of condemnation, "O generation of vipers," etc. But towards the close of his ministry his voice grew more tender and mellow, so that we cannot imagine even the stern Baptist's voice to be otherwise than soft and musical as he uttered the words, the climax of his ministry, "Behold the Lamb," etc. The ministry of John terrified and charmed, stirred society to its very core, answered its purposes, and drove all nearer to or further from God. (7) *Evanesence*. "I am the voice," etc. Notice the difference between the description of Christ and that of John. One is the "Word," abiding and permanent; the other is the "voice," transient and evaporating. John and his ministry were the voice—like the report of a cannon, soon to die away, but not before the shot is sent home. John's voice was soon hushed, but hushed in the music of fulfilment, and in the sweeter voice of the already-present King.

LESSONS. 1. *Many inquire while they ought to know*. This deputation and those that sent them were masters in Israel, and ought to know the coming of their Lord and Messiah. 2. *Many inquire in proper form, but in a wrong spirit*. This deputation were outwardly proper, but inwardly hollow and insincere. 3. *Many inquirers at first raise high hopes, but they are soon blighted*. Doubtless John at first was elated with such a respectable and apparently genuine deputation; but his hopes were soon blighted by the hoar-frost of bigotry and pride. It came to nothing, at least with regard to the majority of them. 4. *The faithful herald should publish his message irrespective of consequences, treat all with respect, answer questions. Some may benefit by others' failures, and drink the water drawn but left by some one else.*—B. T.

Vers. 45—51.—*The guileless inquirer*. Notice—

I. THE CHARACTER OF NATHANAEL IN ITS DISTINGUISHING FEATURES. "An Israelite indeed." This title was partly given to Jacob, and assumed by his descendants. But many of them were Israelites only in name, not in deed. Hereditary titles are often hollow and unreal. They were genuine when bestowed at first as tokens and rewards of courage and service, but when assumed on account of birth merely, they often lack



reality. Nathanael was a true descendant of Jacob, and even superior to his illustrious spiritual ancestors—"an Israelite indeed." His character was distinguished by:

1. *Genuine devotion.* This made him an Israelite indeed, a genuine heir of the title conferred on his illustrious ancestor—"a prince of God," one who could in prayer be victorious with the Almighty. What was he doing underneath the fig tree alone? One thing, doubtless, was struggling, wrestling with God in prayer; and he was successful. The shady fig tree was his Peniel. Every Israelite indeed has his Peniel and fig tree somewhere. Genuine devotion is retiring. The most successful victories are won in seclusion. Very different was Nathanael from Israelites alone in name, who loved to pray standing in public places in order to be seen. The Israelite indeed retires in order not to be seen by any but by the Father of spirits. Every true character is devotional, and the truest devotion is retiring and almost shy. It is the courtship of the soul. It is to be feared that much of the devotion of the present day is mere empty parade. Let others have the rostrum and the corners of the streets; give me the fig tree.
2. *Transparent sincerity.* "In whom there is no guile." (1) No guile of *intellect*. There is a guile of intellect, the prolific parent of sophistry, the mental devil of poor humanity. (2) No guile of *heart*—the parent and refuge of deceit and secret vice. (3) No guile of *conduct*. If absent inwardly, it will be absent outwardly. Guile is peculiarly an inward vice. It shuns publicity, it inhabits the inward recesses of the mind and heart; but when there, it must come to the surface sometimes for breath, occasionally seen by men, always by God. Nathanael was free from this. It is not said that he had no sin, no fault, no weakness; he had, as indicated by his question to Philip, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" He was tainted with the prejudices of his age, and with doubt in consequence; but it was an outward pimple rather than an inward cancer. He had no guile, else it would remain within. Sincerity or guilelessness is an elementary and essential principle of Christian character. Without it Christ was helpless even with regard to the outwardly proper,—he had to leave them with a "woe;" but with it he was triumphantly merciful and saving. Even with regard to the outwardly rebellious and sinful, he was their Friend and Saviour, and they became his followers.
3. *Honest and earnest inquiry after saving truth.* (1) He was *meditative*. He retired regularly under the fig tree, not merely for prayer, but also for holy meditation and honest search for Divine truth. He lived not by bread alone, but felt that his soul must have suitable food as well as his body. He hungered after truth, and made a diligent search for it. (2) He *made the best use of the advantages he possessed*. He had Moses and the prophets, and he was an earnest student of them. He had fully grasped the central truth of their teaching—the promised Messiah; he studied his character and gazed with delight at his portrait as drawn by their inspired pen. Doubtless he had been a spell-bound listener of the great herald of the wilderness, and his soul was stirred into burning expectation. In this respect he was an "Israelite indeed," being the genuine growth of the Messianic promises, and waiting for "the Consolation of Israel." (3) He *welcomed every new light*. No sooner Philip said, "Come and see," than he at once came to Jesus. He "proved all things," and "held fast that which was good."
4. *Intelligence and readiness of faith.* 1. He was *ready to believe*. He had a believing soul. He had lived by faith in the coming Redeemer. There were Christians before the appearance of Christ, looking forward by faith to him; there were Israelites indeed; and Nathanael was one of them. (2) His faith was *discerning*. He saw the Son of God in the Son of Joseph, the King of Israel in Jesus of Nazareth; and the mist of prejudice and doubt vanished before the gaze of his faith and the sight of Jesus. (3) His faith was *intelligent*. He believed because he was convinced, and was convinced because Christ gave an unmistakable proof of his superhuman knowledge so peculiar to the Messiah. His faith and reason went hand-in-hand, and were mutually helpful; so that his faith was intelligent and his intelligence faithful.
5. *A confession of conviction.* (1) His confession is *respectful*. "Rabbi"—a title of honour and respect. (2) His confession is *prompt*. No sooner was he convinced than he confessed—another proof of his guilelessness. Many of the Pharisees believed, but on account of guile did not confess. The "Israelite indeed" promptly confessed him. (3) His confession is *full, and given in an intelligent manner*. "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." His conceptions of Jesus are worthy of him and of the "Israelite indeed." The character of Nathanael was altogether so transparent that Jesus could in it see his

own image as in a glass, and Nathanael could see in Jesus the Son of God and the King of men.

**II. HIS CHARACTER IN RELATION TO JESUS.** 1. *It was such as to attract the admiring attention of Jesus.* Philip was quick in thought and motion with regard to Nathanael. He ran to inform and invite him; but Jesus was before him. "Before Philip called thee, . . . I saw thee." There is a law of attraction in the spiritual world—Nathanael was attracted by Jesus, and Jesus by Nathanael. The pure are attracted by the pure; the sincere by the sincere; and Israel's King was attracted by the "Israelite indeed." 2. *It was such as to cause Jesus to point it out to others.* Jesus was frank and open, and loved to reveal his moral taste and likings. "Behold!" he exclaimed; "look at it, it is worth seeing." (1) *It is rare.* Comparatively rare in every age, especially in that age of unbelief, hypocrisy, and sham. It was a lonely fruit on the almost barren fig tree of Judaism. It was like a lonely star in a sky of almost universal gloom, like a field of corn in a continent of barrenness, or like a lonely well in a burning desert—a treat to Jesus and to his disciples then and now. (2) *It is very valuable.* A genuine coin, a pearl. Most valuable because real and useful. Jesus was going to cultivate the world, plough and sow it; it was most important to have good grain for seed—it was scarce. Jesus could only have a handful, but quality was more important than quantity. Nathanael had the right quality—a genuine seed of the kingdom of heaven, a pillar of the new temple of truth, and a model of character for all ages. (3) *It was very beautiful.* Beauty is ever attractive and worthy of notice, especially spiritual beauty—beauty of character, beauty of soul; and of all beautiful things a beautiful character, a beautiful soul, is the most attractive and most worthy of attention. Jesus points to it, and thus directs the moral taste of the world. The world says, "Behold this or that;" but Jesus, "Behold an Israelite indeed," etc. Nathanael's character was beautiful, especially in that age of moral deformity. It was like a lily among thorns. 3. *It is such as introduces its possessor to a closer acquaintance with Jesus, and to brighter visions of his Person, character, and position.* "Thou shalt see greater things than these." (1) *Greater proofs of his Divinity and Messiahship.* Clearer proofs of his superhuman knowledge, especially of his power in his miracles—his miracles of power and love; new manifestations of the beauty of his Divine and human character. (2) *A clear view of the communication between heaven and earth* of which Jesus is the Medium. "Ye shall see heaven open," etc. The heaven was not merely open, but it was opened, and opened by Christ. This was one of the first acts of his redeeming intervention. It was closed by man's sin, opened by the Son of man's grace. Heaven is ever open to the "Son of man," and ever open to faith in him. Jacob saw the communication between heaven and earth in the ladder. Jesus is the reality of his vision. Angels ascend and descend on and through him. Every prayer goes up and every blessing comes down from heaven through him. Through him there is a free trade carried on between heaven and earth. "Angels ascend and descend," etc. They are very fond of him. As soon as he left heaven for earth they were after him, singing the hymns of his advent and the anthems of his loving mission; they were ready to serve him in his temptation, his agonies, and his ascension; they were ever surrounding his Person. And they are fond of all who by faith are related to him; they become "ministering spirits." The descent from and ascent to heaven would be too deep and high for angels but on the Son of man.

**LESSONS.** 1. *Many of the most beautiful characters are comparatively private,* like Nathanael—rather felt than seen and heard, characterized by quiet usefulness, moral beauty, transparency and sunshine of soul, rather retiring, and to be found under the fig tree rather than on the branches. 2. *You must have the Saviour to appreciate them fully and point them out.* At the last day he shall exhibit many of these retiring but specially beautiful ones. They are only fully known and valued by him. They shall appear with him in glory. 3. *Faith is rewarded here and hereafter.* Its reward is seeing great things, and ever greater things. It is vision of the spiritual and the Divine, and its visions are increasingly grand. Believe in Christ, and heaven is opened; and, once opened, the privileges are great, and the outlook glorious and illimitable.—B. T.

**Ver. 4.—The life that gives light to men.** "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth:" so runs the first verse of the Book of Genesis. "In the beginning was

the Word:" so runs the first verse in the Gospel of John. This resemblance prompts us to look for other resemblances. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light:" so runs the third verse of the Book of Genesis. And then we perceive that John, correspondingly, would lead his readers to think of the greatest of all lights which come from God. He speaks of the *Word* that he may tell us of the *Life* in it, and of the *Life* that he may tell us of the *Light* in it. The Word is a living and light-giving one. What are sun, moon, and stars, and all lamps compared with this light? John is speaking here for the eye of the heart.

I. THE DARKNESS THIS LIGHT IS MEANT TO ILLUMINATE. Be thankful for the lights forming part of the physical creation. There is sunlight even when there is not sunshine. Be thankful for the higher lights of civilization. Also the increasing light coming with every new discovery and invention. Each new generation finds the world better to live in, in many respects. Magnify what light you have outside of Christ; then you will better understand how small it is compared with what he has to give. For a while we may not at all feel the need of Christ's light. But the world becomes gloomy and cheerless enough to many who once reckoned it constantly radiant with brightness. The world very soon puzzles and perplexes those who are thoroughly in earnest. Life is such a short and broken thing to many. The longest life is like a candle; it burns and burns till it burns down to the socket, but it burns none the less; and then what is there left to show? God has noticed whatever darkness there may be in your heart. "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all;" and he wants us to be the same—wants to lead us into the light of constant peace, joy, and purity.

II. THE REASON THIS LIGHT IS SO POWERFUL TO TAKE THE DARKNESS AWAY. The light that God sends is a *life*. What power often dwells in a word—a true and fitting word, coming from the heart, giving just the information and encouragement needed! But then the kindest and wisest human speakers cannot be always present. And so God has a word for us in a *life that can never pass away*. Think of the *power* in his life; of the things he did, and did in such a way as to show he could do a great deal more. Think of the *goodness* of his life—goodness whereby he did good, and goodness whereby he resisted temptation. Think of the *joy* abounding in his life, even in the midst of straits and sufferings. Think of the *confidence* he carried through everything, never doubting whence he had come or what he could do. Think especially of the *Resurrection and life in heaven*. It is from a world of life and light that this luminous life shines down upon us.

III. HOW THIS LIGHT BECOMES AVAILABLE TO US. He who told his disciples to shine, does his very best to shine himself. But then we must open our eyes to see this light. Lamps are nothing save as men are willing to use them. It is light we have to seek for; the darkness comes without seeking. Let Jesus shine in our hearts for spiritual blessings corresponding to those natural ones which come through ordinary lights. Let us aim to look back from the safety and fulness of the perfect day, saying, "Christ has indeed been a Light to me."—Y.

Vers. 10—12.—*Receiving Christ, and the result of it.* I. CHRIST IGNORED. "The world knew him not." This statement is humiliating to the world, not to Christ. The world makes a great parade of its insight and its power to give deciding verdicts; but here is its very Maker in its midst, yet it knows him not. Here surely is the crowning sin of the world, that it knows not him who is the Fountain of all its boasted powers. Were the world what it ought to be, it would welcome its Maker, rejoicing in the presence of him who gave its intellect and all the material on which that intellect is so busy. In the face of this statement of John, it should not trouble us that so much of the world's intellect and grandeur ignores Christ. A man with the worldly spirit strong in him is contented with his own infallibility and certainty. Rather let us, when we see the world's complacent ignoring of Christ, contrast it with the Christian's substantial knowledge of him. And seeing that the world, with all its knowledge, knows not Christ, let us bear in mind how many things the Christian himself does not yet know.

II. CHRIST IGNORED WHERE MOST OF ALL HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN RECEIVED. The reference is doubtless to Christ's coming into the land of Israel. He was not only the world's Maker, but Israel's Messiah, and Israel failed to recognize him in either

capacity. They did not give him even a provisional reception till such time as his claim could be examined; for such seems the force of *ναπέλαβον*. They were prejudiced against him from the very first. Every word and act were twisted against him. What candour there is in these admissions of John! Christianity fears no statement of facts. The more emphatic and bitter human rejections became the more clearly the necessity of a Christ was proved.

**III. RECEIVING CHRIST, AND ITS RESULT.** Here is the whole truth. The world cannot receive Christ, but always there are some who go out from the world because they are not of the world. Among the children of men there is a rejecting spirit and a receiving spirit. He who receives Christ must be all the more determined and cordial in his reception, because he sees so many rejecting; and he who is at all inclined to consider the claims of Christ must be careful not to be turned aside because so many are indifferent. See with your own eyes. All true things have met with scorn and persecution at first. But what is it to receive Christ? Evidently to deliver ourselves over to his rule and authority. If a man should receive a traveller into his house, and give him henceforth the disposition of everything there, that would give the analogy as to how we should receive Christ; and so receiving Christ, we gain the right to become sons of God. We have our part in the natural world's existence through Christ, and that comes without our willing; but a part in the highest attainment belonging to human life, even sonship towards God, can only come through our voluntary submission to Christ. Jesus gives true and humble disciples the right to become sons of God; and teaching them to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven," he involves the constant remembrance of this right in every true prayer.—Y.

**Ver. 17.—Moses and Christ.** Let us proceed at once to particular instances of the Law given through Moses, and of the grace and truth coming through Jesus Christ. Thus we shall better see how Moses is brought into connection with Christ, and Law into connection with grace and truth. Look, then, at *Exod. xx.*, where the great principles of the Law given through Moses are stated.

**I. CONSIDER THE BASIS OF JEHOVAH'S CLAIM.** "I am Jehovah thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The fact of deliverance was indisputable, and just as indisputable the fact that the people had not delivered themselves; and for a while the delivered people hardly knew why they were delivered. Left to themselves, they might have scattered; but there was a compulsion on them all the time—a compulsion into liberty, a compulsion to go through the Red Sea, a compulsion towards the awful solitudes of Sinai. Then at last Jehovah tells them what he expects. He who has done great things for them wants to know what they will do for him; and, lest they be inattentive, he states, to begin with, the solid basis of his claim. Then turn from Moses to Jesus Christ, and we have but another aspect of the same Jehovah. Jehovah was really gracious in the giving of the Law; but the grace got hidden. In Jesus Christ grace is manifest to all. There is the basis of a claim on you. You have but to look back on the experiences of others, human beings like yourselves—like in infirmity, like in manifold needs, like in the pollution of an evil heart, like in suffering and sorrow, like in sickness and mortality. As Jesus in the flesh actually dealt with men in various positions, so now, in the spirit according to his view of your needs, will he deal with you. Jesus turned no water to blood, smote no cattle with pestilence, bruised no fields with hail, gathered no clouds of locusts, wrapt no land in gross darkness, robbed no parents of their firstborn, overwhelmed no armies in the sea. A little child can see that grace and truth are in Jesus Christ.

**II. CONSIDER THE CLAIM OF JEHOVAH ITSELF.** Take the first item. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Look at all that is involved in this claim. It means that we are to worship Jehovah alone, and that, of course, assumes that we are actually worshippers of the one God to begin with. What if we are deluding ourselves with mere outward performances before a name? Do we know what we worship? Labelling the unknown with the name of God does not make it better known. And Moses gave no help in revealing the nature of God. He uttered bare law. But Jesus comes with a grace and truth which are strangely self-revealing. He winds gently into the hearts of men, by every entrance he can find. He quietly accepts as his right the reverence and adoration of every heart willing to render them. No long elucidations are needed to

make it plain that he is a gracious Being. We need no formal command to worship him. We are instinctively drawn to our knees in his presence. He carries the essence of his commandments charactered in his gracious face. Thus *by considering all the ten commandments*, we should get illustrations of the grace and truth in Jesus Christ. The ten commandments, just by themselves, however often repeated, can bring comfort to no human being, only a deeper conviction of one's sin and misery. Jesus brings the Law just as vigorously as Moses; but he brings more than Law. Through his demands there shine forth gloriously *grace and truth*, favour and reality. Not simply good wishes on the one side, or bare reality on the other. Christ brings a grace that is truthful, and a truth that is gracious. He comes as both the kindest and ablest of physicians. He gives strength before he asks service. Grace and truth flow from him to us, and then in due time grace and truth flow forth from us also.—Y.

Ver. 38.—*A question for seekers.* I. A FIRST MEETING WITH SOME OF THE DISCIPLES. Interesting to look back from the concluding to the beginning chapters of this Gospel—from the days when the apostles were trusted friends to the days when Jesus and they were but as strangers. Here we have a record of the first meeting with some of them. Jesus is walking by the banks of the Jordan—a Teacher who has been made fit to teach, waiting now for scholars; and some of the scholars, all unknown to themselves, have been becoming fit for Jesus in the preparatory school of John. To them John must often have spoken of the sin of the world, and the appointed Lamb of God who was to take it away. What wonder, then, that the Lamb of God, really set before their gaze, should draw their footsteps towards him?

II. THE EVIDENT STRONG INTEREST WHICH JESUS HAD EXCITED IN THE MINDS OF THESE TWO MEN. They could not help following him. We cannot but contrast this overmastering interest on their part with the absence of interest in Jesus on our part. Surely, if such an interest was possible to them, it must in some way be possible to us. As we read the Gospels we ought to feel that Jesus of Nazareth was the most important Person in the world at that time, far more important than the greatest of rulers and the wisest of men; far more important to each person who came in contact with him than the nearest of his kindred could be—far more important to John the Baptist than his parents, Zacharias and Elisabeth; far more important to John the disciple than Zebedee his father; far more important to Andrew than Simon his brother; far more important to Philip than Nathanael his friend. If we are not more interested in the doings and claims of any one else, we shall fail to appreciate Jesus as he ought to be appreciated.

III. HOW CAME THIS STRONG INTEREST TO BE EXCITED? The men had been amply prepared. They had been impressively told of the need Jesus came to supply. Often must John and Andrew have heard the Baptist calling the crowd to repentance. Doubtless the Baptist had often led his disciples to meditate very earnestly on the wickedness, the wants, and the woes of the great world around them, with its Pharisees and Sadducees, its publicans and sinners, its blind and lame, lepers and demoniacs, poor and destitute. How could earnest and pitying men be otherwise than interested in him who was to sweep the sin-caused troubles of the world away? And our interest must come in the same way.

IV. THE QUESTION JESUS ASKS THESE INTERESTED ONES. He seeks to give direction and depth to this interest. He seeks to eliminate all mere curiosity and wonder-seeking. Jesus himself was a Seeker having definite and most decided aims. Such a question as met these disciples should meet us in all our formal approaches to God. Are we really seeking anything? and if so, what is it? Only those who are evidently real seekers can ever get anything out of Christ. Such persons will soon be able to answer Christ's question. He helps the intent seeker to find all he wants in him.—Y.

Ver. 42.—*Bringing men to Jesus.* Jesus asks Andrew, "What seek ye?" and the question soon shows fruit in Andrew seeking out his own brother Simon. The New Testament deals with spiritual things, but that does not prevent it from being full of natural touches. What Andrew did is just the very thing which in like circumstances we might have been expected to do. And surely it is the most reasonable of conjectures that Andrew, who began by bringing his own brother, must have been the bringer

also of many who were mere strangers. Interest in natural kinsmen would soon be merged in the wider interest a Christian must feel in humanity at large. Peter was Andrew's first gift to Jesus, and he may have been the easiest. To bring a human being into real, loving contact with Jesus is not an easy thing; but what a service, what a blessing and a joy, to every one concerned!

I. Andrew was able to bring Peter to Jesus because HE HAD FIRST OF ALL BEEN BROUGHT HIMSELF. Andrew had first of all been himself the subject of spiritual illumination. God must have shined in his heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He had been brought to Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. The acquaintance had been very short, but a great deal may be done in a short time when the human heart has been getting ready to meet with Christ, when there is perfect openness and simplicity of mind—truth on one side and an eager seeker after it on the other. To get other people as far as Peter, we must first of all have got as far as Andrew ourselves. How should the blind lead the blind? We must not wait for an Andrew. God has his own agency for us. He may send some John the Baptist, saying, "Behold!" to us. We must consider well the obstacles in our way to Jesus, which none can remove but ourselves—procrastination, bosom sins, spiritual indolence, neglect of the Scriptures.

II. CONSIDER WHO IT WAS THAT ANDREW BROUGHT. His *own* brother Simon. So natural brotherhood is distinguished from that spiritual brotherhood which afterwards sprang into existence as regenerated believers in Christ felt the strong tie binding them together. What brother ought not to be to brother, and yet what he may very easily become, is shown from Cain and Abel, and Joseph and his brethren. What brother ought to be to brother is shown in this seeking of Simon by Andrew. Great opportunities are given by natural brotherhood, mutually cherished. Give every good thing in nature a chance to become also a minister of grace.

III. CONSIDER WHAT ANDREW SAID TO PETER. "We have found the Messiah." This is as much good news for us as it was for Peter. What Andrew said he said at first, after a very brief acquaintance; but he would go on saying it all the more as day after day opened up the riches of Messiah's mission and power. Observe the *plural* form of the announcement. The other disciple agreed with Andrew in his judgment. Look out for those and listen to them who bear the same message as Andrew, though not in quite the same form. We have words and acts of Jesus constantly forced on our attention. If we cannot be brought to Jesus, Jesus is brought to us. All bringing of men to Jesus must be preceded, more or less, by bringing of Jesus to men. Andrew must have brought such a vivid and powerful account of his talk with Jesus as would amount practically to a bringing of Jesus.—Y.

Vers. 45—51.—*Jesus and Nathanael.* Jesus praises Nathanael both in what he says to others concerning him, and what he says directly to himself. Whatever Jesus may have found praiseworthy in the other four disciples, he said nothing. Nathanael stands out very distinctly as having in him elements of character needing to be published to all disciples. Jesus meant to say to others, "Be ye as this man. Be ye also Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile. Be ye those who have peculiar individual experiences under the fig tree." And so we must try to discover what it is to be "an Israelite indeed," and what it was Jesus specially observed when Nathanael was under the fig tree.

I. Begin with the most definite word, AN ISRAELITE INDEED. Some are Israelites only in appearance—Israelites according to the flesh, perhaps, yet not therefore Israelites indeed. An Israelite indeed is one like Israel. Israel is the man of two names—Jacob to begin with, Israel afterwards. We must look at him in *all* the scenes of his life. Jacob at Bethel must be specially considered, also that later wrestling till the breaking of the day. On that occasion Jacob was resolved. With him it was now or never. He had a blessing to get that meant salvation and prosperity, and therefore, as a drowning man grasps the rope, he grasped the only Being who could give that blessing. That was how Israel got his name, entered into his privilege, and became an example to us. An Israelite indeed is one who wrestles with the Giver of spiritual blessings; one who has known long agonies of the heart; one who has toiled with strong crying and tears, if only he might get the blessing of a conscience undefiled, and a heart perfectly subjected to the will of God.

II. THE LIGHT THUS CAST ON THE CHARACTER OF NATHANAEL. He was an Israelite indeed. Therefore he had known intense spiritual struggles. His bosom had been the seat of some great searching influence akin to that which Israel passed through when he wrestled to the breaking of the day. Nathanael must have had his time of wrestling under the fig tree. Something was resolved, something attained. What the something was we know not, for Jesus perfectly respects Nathanael's secret, even while he makes Nathanael feel that he knows it.

III. WE ALL SHOULD HAVE OUR TIME UNDER THE FIG TREE. Seek a season wherein the underlying realities of life shall meet us face to face. Struggles like those of Nathanael are indicated again and again in the Book of Psalms. If you would understand Ps. cxxxix., you must have had your time under the fig tree. Till you have had such a time you are without a key to the deepest, most precious utterances of Scripture. The thought of Nathanael should stir us up to that struggle which makes a spiritual man so rich and strong, and, above all, so satisfying a sight to the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. WHEN WE ARE UNDER THE FIG TREE JESUS KNOWS ABOUT IT. Nathanael knows that Jesus has gazed upon his heart and seen its most hidden thoughts. He is not dependent upon the exactness of our recollections, or the fulness of our descriptions. He sees the fulness of the inward life just as it is. Nathanael knew that henceforth to one Being in the universe at least secrets were not secrets. Not merely that Nathanael was seen, but seen by the eye of Jesus, that made the discovery so important. "I saw thee." Put all the fulness of meaning you can into that "I."—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

### CHAPTER II.

Ver. 1—ch. iii. 2.—4. *The testimony of signs to the glory of the Word made flesh.*

Vers. 1—12.—(1) *The first sign, the beginning of signs. Mastery over the old creation. Sign of love and power.* The description of the preceding narrative, given in ver. 11, is the true key to it. It is impressive on several accounts. Christ had not yet given any "sign" of the invisible and eternal glory which the evangelist in his prologue had claimed for him. He had not in his own person "manifested" the unique majesty of his will, nor revealed the direction in which the power he wielded would most freely move. John, by this statement, (1) puts down a positive disclaimer of the whole cycle of portents which, when he wrote, had begun to hover in romantic and exaggerated fashion around the infancy and minority of Jesus. (2) He shows that his purpose is to bring back from forgetfulness the primary and most impressive events which did in reality characterize the earliest ministry of Christ. (3) He emphasizes the scene of some of these manifestations as restricted to a spot which, however difficult actually to identify, was nevertheless in Galilee, in which prophecy had foretold a great manifestation of Divine light. (4) He lays stress on the fact that the prime

object of it was to convey to his *disciples*, to men who knew that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, something of the power which he had for meeting any emergency that might arise. He did not seek to promote, nor did he succeed in exciting, the village wonder at a magical entertainment; nor did the bridegroom, nor the governor of the feast, nor so far as we know even Mary herself, fully apprehend in the event what "the disciples" saw. These disciples were probably acting the part of the *diakonoi*. They were admitted to a great sign of superhuman power. They believed on him. This is all we are told of the effect of the "sign." (5) The entire originality of the sign, one for which the previous narrative and prologue do not in the least prepare us, is one of the continual surprises of this Gospel. The introductory notes of this great symphony are such that we might be disposed to conjecture beforehand that One who is the Logos made flesh, whose glory is that of an only begotten Son of God, who is the predestined Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, who is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and the Link and Ladder between heaven and earth, the predicted Messiah and Son of Man, will with Divine aloofness scarce touch with his feet this common earth. Human homes and love and festal rejoicings

are so immeasurably beneath him that he can neither augment their earthly exhilaration nor take part in such carnal and mundane considerations. Such ideas may have crowded the imagination of the sons of Zebedee, of Philip too and of Nathanael. Already they may have been losing in a maze of mystery the Divine humanity, the intense and tender sympathy of Jesus with our everyday life, the profound interest felt in our earthly career. They may have needed to be taught some great lesson of the blending of the sacred with the secular, of the water of purification with the true, strong, fragrant wine of the kingdom. They may have needed, at this moment, the prosaic return to ordinary life over which their new Lord would preside, and from which he would never stand aloof. (6) All this is, moreover, highly accentuated by the peculiar character of this sign. It was a creative act. The idea that it was merely a hastening by his will of the natural processes by which water is always being transformed into wine by the vine, seems contradicted by the fact that the vine does *not* transform water into wine, but combines with the water other substances, cunningly and wondrously mixing with it the organic compounds which it subtracts from the air and soil, and which are necessary for the purpose. Water which has become wine is not transubstantiated into wine. The water is still there; but there are added to it other elements and compounds. The lesson is undoubtedly taught that he who performed this prodigy called certain elements and forces into being by the simple fiat of his will. Evolutionary hastening of natural processes do not in the least apply. If that took place which the disciples (John among them) saw and handled and tasted, then we have an undeniable act of creation. There was then no other antecedent to this new category of existence except the will of Christ. This is the obvious intention of the historian. Other explanations are offered. The rationalistic hypothesis of a quiet and pious fraud on the part of Mary is too gross for belief. The mere magic, or sleight of hand, is so utterly foreign to the narrative that, though Renan seems to favour it, the entire place assigned to the "miracle" renders it utterly inconceivable. Some have gone so

far as to say that the interesting discourse of Jesus during the repast inclined the guests to believe that, though their thirst had been quenched with pure water, it was veritable and precious wine. This Reuss calls *un sucroit d'absurdité*. To suppose, with Ewald and Lange, that it was a miracle upon the minds of the guests, who believed they had drunk wine, when in reality they had only tasted water, is, as Weiss admits, another form of the natural explanation. Why, moreover, should the didactic energy of Jesus not more frequently have produced a like impression? The hypothesis of Strauss is far more rational, viz. that we have here the mythopoeic tendency at full work. Seeing that Moses sweetened the bitter waters, and transformed the Nile into blood, and that Elijah multiplied the oil in the widow's cruse, so Strauss contended that the Messiah must have done the like, and that this "miracle of luxury" is one of the glorifying myths by which Jesus is supposed to have transformed the water of Jewish ceremonial into the wine of the kingdom of grace. This theory is refuted by the enormous difficulty of finding any party in the Church, or of discovering any tendency in the Christian community or outside in the Hellenic schools, which could have evolved such an event—so capable of being misinterpreted—and that too out of a moral consciousness diametrically opposed to such an idea of Messiah. Certainly a vastly preponderating element of the gospel is clean contrary to such an idea of the Christ. Apart from there being some historic fact underlying the story, it seems incredible that it should have been invented by Christian, or Gnostic, or Hebrew tradition. The same may be said of Baur's hypothesis and of Keim's, (1) that the pseudo-John invented the miracle to embody the idea of contrast between the disciples of John the Baptist and of Christ; or (2) that the saying of Jesus, "Shall the children of the bridechamber fast while the Bridegroom is with them?" needed embodiment in some concrete fact; or that of Reuss, who supposes that the author, having invented a series of imaginary interviews and testimonies, must needs cap them with a miracle. Thoma sees in the representation the evangelist's sublimation of the banquet in the house of Levi, under



the form of the Wisdom or Logos festival of Prov. ix. and Eccles. i. 16—18 and xxiv. 1—25. The Logos is here the symposium, and the feast corresponds with the bridal festival of the Apocalypse. Several hypotheses have been fashioned, in order to explain the forgery of the narrative, and they are quite as numerous as the attempted solutions by orthodox expositors of the purpose or significance of the miracle. It is perfectly gratuitous and arbitrary on the part of Baur to condemn the *narrative* because he could not find support for it in the synoptic Gospels. We have seen (see Introduction) that each evangelist, and especially Matthew and Luke, had separate access to a group of facts and sayings peculiar to himself, and nearly as numerous and memorable as those which characterize the Fourth Gospel. Baumgarten-Crusius is wrong in placing this event at the lowest point of the series of miracles of this Gospel. It is necessary to complete the view which the evangelist formed of the miraculous power of Christ, for him to demonstrate authority over the matter (*ἄλφ*) of the created universe. In ch. vi. he illustrates Christ's relation to the forces of nature, when the Lord hushed the storm and walked on the sea; in ch. xxi., by narrating a miraculous draught of fishes, he exhibits the Lord's control over the *animate* creation; and in other instances, the like mastery over the human body, over its diseases, necessities, and death (see ch. iv., v., vi., xi.). If the other evangelists have passed it by, we must remember that they ignore the entire period of our Lord's activity which intervened between the temptation and the imprisonment of John the Baptist. The disciple to whom Jesus on the cross entrusted the care of his mother might have special reasons for recording almost the only scene in which that mother played any part. The most impressive circumstance is that the disciples of John, who had learned his stern denunciation of sin and his call to repentance, were to be taught that the highest life was not to be secured by abjuring marriage, and throwing a tragic gloom over human life, but by hallowing and consecrating the home, the source and nurse of the natural life. Christ first purifies the home, then the temple, then the individual.

Ver. 1.—On the third day there was a marriage in Cana<sup>1</sup> of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Should the supposed discovery of Bethabara or Bethany beyond Jordan, at a spot a short distance south of the Lake of Gennesareth, be verified, then there is no difficulty in accepting the view of Baur as to the identity of the "third day," reckoning it as the morrow of the day on which Nathanael was called to be a disciple. The first day mentioned would be ch. i. 29; the second day, ch. i. 35; and the third identical with the day mentioned in ch. i. 43, 45. There would be time for the rapid journey from the Jordan to Cana. But if the third day be interpreted more naturally, as the third after the day mentioned in ch. i. 44—51, time is given for the journey from the traditional site near Jericho to either of the sites which claim to be the scene of this earliest miracle. It is a march of twenty hours, which would occupy two or three days. Moreover, as wedding-feasts often occupied in Palestine seven or even fourteen days (Gen. xxix. 27; Judg. xiv. 15; Tobit viii. 19; ix. 4; x. 1), the festivities may have been advanced, and some explanation be thus given of the exhaustion of the supply of wine. Consequently, there are several justifications and explanations of that which is condemned by Baur and others as an unhistorical element. If the first day was that on which John bore his testimony before the Sanhedrin; the second, ch. i. 29; the third, ch. i. 35; the fourth, ch. i. 43, 45;—the day of the wedding at Cana would be the seventh, and thus a sacred week, corresponding with the solemn week that terminated with Easter Day, would be seen to have found place in the earliest periods of the ministry. *The mother of Jesus was there.* Since Nathanael of Cana was summoned as a friend, and since the first group of the disciples were familiar with each other and him, the inference is that the bride or bridegroom was an intimate friend of the entire party. Weiss claims the reference to the little town of Cana "as another of those recollections, which testify indubitably to the historical character of the Gospel" ('Life of Christ,' vol. i. p. 377). The presence of the mother of the Lord at Cana makes it also probable that she had, after the death of Joseph, removed from Nazareth to Cana. This is confirmed by the casual remark in Mark vi. 3 that his sisters only were still resident in their former home. Moreover, it would explain the return of Jesus from the scene of his baptism to his temporary home (but see ver. 12). The traditional *Kefr Kenneh* is situated on

<sup>1</sup> Alford, R.T., and T.R. spell *Kanā*; Westcott and Hort, *Kanā*; Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Weym., *Kanā*.

rising ground four miles and a half north-east of Nazareth, and the remains of a Greek church are still to be seen there. The site is not inconsistent with the conditions. We may suppose it to be called "of Galilee" to distinguish it from a Cana in *Peræa* mentioned by Josephus ('Vita,' xvi. 1); but more probably from the Kanah in the tribe of Asher, mentioned in Josh. xix. 28. The situation of this town in Phœnicia may have been so far from Galilee proper as to have rendered the expression desirable. Dr. Robinson believed that he had hit more certainly upon the site by finding a small village bearing the name *Cana el Djelil*, or Khurbet Kana, which lies some seven miles north-east from Nazareth beyond *Sepphoris*. The adjunct, *el Djelil*, suggested the preservation of the old designation drawn from this very narrative. This identification was accepted by Ritter and Meyer; Stanley considered it very doubtful, and so do Westcott ('Comm.,' *in loc.*) and Dr. Scilah Merrill, in 'Pict. Palestine,' ii. pp. 59—63. The more recent investigations of the Palest. Expl. Society have led once more to the recognition of the traditional site, independently maintained by Hengstenberg, Godet, Moulton, and others. Its site is picturesque, and resembles the position of many Italian towns perched on the slope of a low hill at the head of valleys forming roadways to the coast and to the lake. Its Greek name, *Cana*, meaning "a reed," was probably derived from the reeds which grow in the marshy plain below it (compare Cannæ, Canossa, Cannes. See Hugh Macmillan).

Ver. 2.—And both Jesus was called (*ἐκλήθη*, aorist, not pluperfect, and contrasted with the *ἦν* of ver. 1)—after his return from Bethany—and his disciples to the marriage. Jesus had no disciples before the events recorded in the previous chapter. These men may have been friends of each other and of the bridal party, and received such an invitation before their visit to the banks of the Jordan; but it is far more probable that these individuals already mentioned, or that some of them, and that most certainly John his near relative (see Introduction), were invited, because they were in the society of Jesus.

Ver. 3.—A large accession of guests in such a humble home might easily be supposed to make a famine in the provisions, and so we read, And when the wine failed<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> N\* and Vet. Lat. here add *οἶνον οὐκ εἶχον ὅτι συνετελέσθη ὁ οἶνος τοῦ γάμου, εἴτα*, "They had no wine, because the wine of the marriage was consumed." Westcott and Hort have placed the gloss in the margin, and Tischendorf (8th edit.) has introduced it into his text. See Hugh Macmillan's

—either from this cause, or from the poverty of the hosts, whose willingness and welcome were larger than their means, or by reason of an advanced stage in the festival—the mother of Jesus saith to him, They have no wine.<sup>1</sup> The simple presence of the Lord and of his mother, of such guests as these, at a wedding-feast, is a Divine rebuke of all that morbid asceticism which crept from Essenism and Orientalism into the Christian Church, of all that false pietism and fancied purity which made marriage a contamination, and exalted virginity to an unnatural elevation. The tender-hearted interest felt by the blessed mother of the Lord in the condition of the hosts, and her tone of authority towards the *διδάκοντες*, are eminently natural; her tacit request for help, though she does not specify the way in which the help should be given, implies on her part something of presumption in indicating to our Lord the course he should adopt. A question of great interest arises—What did she mean by her appeal? Bengel suggested that Mary simply intended: "Let us depart before the poverty of our hosts reveals itself." This makes Christ's reply an acceptance of her hint; but along other lines the rabbis were accustomed to say that wine and life were in the mouth of a rabbi (see Geikie's 'Life of Christ,' i. 475; Wünsche, *in loc.*). We are expressly told that this is the beginning of signs, and therefore we have no right to conclude that, previous to this, in the home at Nazareth, Jesus had been accustomed to conquer fate and master poverty and compel circumstances by miraculous powers for his own or for his mother's support. We know that it was a temptation of the devil that he should perform some such miracle for his own sustenance, and that he had sternly suppressed the suggestion of the evil one. The mother must have known his powers, and must have known his mind on this very matter. What did she suggest? Was she thinking mainly of the need of wine, or firstly and chiefly of the honour and glory of her Son? She supposed that a moment had arrived when he should by some royal act assert his imperial rights, and give an order which would be obeyed as that of Sovereign Prince. Precisely the same spirit prevailed always in his home and among his disciples—an eager desire that he should manifest himself to the world (cf. ch. vii. 4—6). The disciples did not lose it on the night of the Passion, or the eve of the Ascension (ch. xiv. 22; Acts i. 6). If this was the real meaning of the remark, "They have

discourse on "They have no Wine," in his work entitled, 'The True Vine.'

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.), with N\* and little other authority, reads, *οἶνος οὐκ ἔστι*.

no wine," it becomes singularly interesting to observe the method of our Lord. The request for a supply of additional solace and refreshment *was* complied with. The suggestion to show himself to the world was as resolutely withheld. There was no pomp, no claim, no self-assertion; there was quiet, boundless, affluent love. The glory of Divine love was manifested, the need was satisfied; but the impression was not intended to go beyond the hearts of those beings who would partially understand it, at the right time.

Ver. 4.—With this thought, the reply of Jesus to the premature suggestion of the mother becomes perfectly comprehensible. What is there to me and thee, O woman? Mine hour has not yet come. The appellation "woman" was used by him upon the cross, when he was concerned most humanly and tenderly with her great grief and desolation, and therefore had no breath of unfilial harshness in it (cf. ch. xix. 26; Dio Cassius, 'Hist.,' li. 12, where Augustus addresses Cleopatra, *Θαυράϊ δ' γύναι*. Maldonatus admits that Catholics "in varias tamen de sensu hujus loci sententias distracti sunt"). But the proverbial *Tí ἐμὸν καὶ σοί*; wheresoever the words occur, imply, if not personal estrangement, yet as to the matter in hand some divergence of feeling (see Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke viii. 28; see also 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Chron. xxxv. 21). Almost all commentators seem to suggest that our Lord refused to be guided by a mother's direction; that he wished her to understand that he was breaking off from her control and from that silent submission which he had hitherto willingly yielded (so Meyer, Hengstenberg, Godet, Westcott, Tholuck, Ebrard, and Lange). Schaff has quoted from the Fathers before the Nestorian controversy clear proof that they admitted censure, and therefore blame, in the blessed Virgin Mary. Still, it seems to me that the cause of the censure, coupled with an immediate response to her special request about the wine, has not been sufficiently appreciated. He said, "Mine hour is not yet come." It would have come if the provision of wine was the ground of divergence of sentiment; if the moment for the supply of these temporal wants were the point of difference between them. The "hour" for Christ to tell the world all that Mary knew had *not* come. The hour of the full revelation of his Messianic claims had not come, nor did it come in the temple, or by the lake, or in the feast-day; not till the awful moment of rejection, when death was hovering over him, and the blow was about to fall, did he say, "The hour has come" (see ch. xii. 23; xvii. 1)—the hour of his greatest glory. "The hour had not yet come." The hour would come when rivers of living

water would be supplied to all those who come to him; when the blood he would shed would be a Divine stream, clear as crystal, for the refreshment of all nations; when at another marriage-supper of a saved humanity the precious blood should be an ample supply of costly wine for all the world. Moreover, the link at the present moment between our Lord and his mother must begin to shade into something more spiritual. It was not possible that he should be holden by it. A sword would pierce through her maternal heart when she became gradually alive to the fact that they that do the will of his Father, the same were his "brothers, sisters, and mother."

Ver. 5.—His mother saith unto the servants (*διδάκονοι*, not *ὑπηρέται*, not *δούλοι*). The habits of Oriental life at the present day make it extremely probable that the disciples of Jesus were themselves taking the place of those who graciously waited upon the guests. If so, the language of Mary to them, and the special effect of the whole scene upon their minds, become marked and suggestive. Be that as it may, the mother of Jesus clearly understood by the gentle rebuke she received, that Christ, her Son, had read her heart, and was going in some way, not to gratify her darling wish, but at least to take her hint for the consolation of her young friends, and to attend to her suggestion. Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Though in some sense alighted or reproved, she exhibits the most entire confidence in her Son and Lord. She encourages the servants to do whatever he might command. More may have passed between them than is reported. The evangelist often suggests omitted details (as in ch. xi. 28; iii. 1, 2; and elsewhere). The faith of Mary was not depressed by the discovery that there were depths of character in her Son which she could not fathom. Obedience to Christ will always be our duty, even though we cannot penetrate the reasons of his command. An interesting illustration of Mary's words may be seen in Gen. xli. 55, where Pharaoh gives the like injunction to his servants concerning Joseph. Archdeacon Watkins records a curious tradition, mentioned by Jerome in his Prologue to the Gospel, that John was himself the bridegroom, but that, guided by the miracle, he left all and followed Christ (see Sears' 'Heart of Jesus,' Trench, 'Miracles,' p. 98).

Ver. 6.—Now there were (*ἐστίν*, or) placed there six water-pots of stone, after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece. Stone was often used for these receptacles, as more calculated to preserve the purity of the water (Winesche refers to 'Beza,' ii. 2; Westcott quotes 'Sots,'

4; Barclay, in his translation of 'Mishna,' § 17, enumerates earthenware and other material as lawful). It is interesting that these stone jars are still used in this very neighbourhood for like purposes ('Pict. Palestine'). This large number of jars of considerable magnitude was doubtless due in part to the number of the guests, and to the scrupulous attention to ceremonial purity that was enjoined by the oral law (see 'Mishna,' § 17; and Lightfoot, *in loc.*). They were accustomed to wash, not only the hands, but "cups, brazen vessels, and tables" (see Matt. xv. 2 and parallel passages). (For this use of *κατά*, see 2 Tim. i. 1, in which "according to" easily passes into the sense of "for the sake of," "after the manner of.") The Attic measure *metretres* was equal to the Hebrew *bath* (Josephus, 'Ant.' viii. 2. 9), and stands for it in the LXX. of 2 Chron. iv. 5, and this equalled  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Roman *amphoræ*, 8 gallons +  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pints. So that six jars containing 2 or 3 *metretres*, say  $2\frac{1}{2}$  =  $6 \times 2.5 \times 8$  gallons + 7.5 pints =  $6 \times 2.5 \times 71.5$  pints = 134 gallons and a fraction. The jars may have differed in shape, according as they were adapted for different purposes; but *ἀρά* must be translated distributively, and we cannot evade the enormous capacity of the jars, and therefore the abundance of the gift thus provided. Various efforts have been made to reduce the extent of the provision; but the obvious implication of the narrative is that the six jars were the *locale* of the miracle. Dr. Moulton and Dr. Westcott suggest that these water-pots were filled with pure water, but that the wine was "drawn" from the water-supply to which the servants had access, and that no more wine was provided than that which was borne to the governor of the feast. Others have supposed that simply the water *drawn* from the jars was transformed in the process. These suppositions make the entire reference to the water-pots extremely obscure and unnecessary. The large quantity of wine thus offered to these humble folks corresponds with the affluence of Nature in all her moods—the munificence of spring blossoms, the harvest of the sea, the exuberance of sunlight, the superfluity of rain that falls on the oceans, the copiousness of all God's ways. When, on other occasions, the Lord added to the supplies of food in fishes and bread, his lavish abundance corresponds with the riches of his loving-kindness on this occasion. There was provided, not the material for a meal, but an ample dowry for such a bride. No mere magical change, momentarily confounding perception and leaving no trace behind, but a supply which would be a standing proof of the reality of what had been done.

Ver. 7.—Jesus saith to them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them to the brim. They had, therefore, been emptied already for the purifying purposes and processes of the large party, probably suggesting that the friends of the bridegroom were solicitous to obey the religious discipline which was believed to be in harmony with the Divine will. The expression, *ἕως ἄνω*, seems added to emphasize the quantity of wine thus provided. The miracle took place between the filling of the jars and their being drawn upon. We are not permitted to look more closely into this mystery. The finger of God, the will of the Creator, determines the result. The servants knew that they had filled the jars with water. The next thing, and all that we know, is that the Lord said—

Ver. 8.—Draw forth (the object of the verb is not in the sentence. He did not say the "water" which you placed there, nor the "wine" into which it has been transformed, but simply, "Draw forth"), and bear to the governor of the feast. The traditional interpretation, that the water-jars were the source of the unwonted supply, and the measure of it, strongly commends itself in preference to the suggestions of Westcott, Moulton, as well as Barnes, Olshausen, and others. The *ἀρχι-τρίκλινος*, the "master of the table," is the chief servant presiding over the arrangements of the feast. This was an Attic official, referred to by Athenæus (iv. c. 70) as *τραπέζοποιός* (cf. Heliodor., vii. 27). The "symposiarch," *arbitrator bibendi*, is not to be confounded with him. The latter was one of the guests chosen to taste the wine, etc. (see Eccles. xxxii. 1, where he is called *ἡγοούμενος*). The "governor" is one who occupies a still higher position of importance in Greek feasts. There is no other trace of the Attic usage among the Jews. As the passage in Ecclesiasticus indicates a different custom, and the references to something similar describe the officer by different names, no very sure conclusion can be drawn. Wünsche says that, ordinarily, the master of the house was bound to serve his guests, and preside over the distribution of food and presents. Thus, at the marriage of his son, Rabbi Gamaliel served all his invited guests. Trench, Alford, and Wordsworth think that the governor here was one of the invited guests, from the freedom with which he addressed the bridegroom. Meyer, Godet, take the view that he was not. And they bear it,<sup>1</sup> conscious of a wondrous fact, which must have filled them with con-

<sup>1</sup> The T.R. reads *καί*; the R.T. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, with N, B, K, L, 1, 33, and numerous other authorities, *οὐδέ*.

sternation. At first the order must have seemed like folly, as when Moses called on Israel to "go forward" into the Red Sea, or as when Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take up thy bed, and walk" "They bear it."

Ver. 9.—When the governor of the feast tasted the water which had become wine. Luther translated, "Den Wein der Wasser gewesen war"—"The wine which had been water." No other explanation is possible than one that asserts an astounding contravention of the ordinary evolutions and sequences of nature. If wine has taken the place of water, there has been added to the water that which was not there before. The vine, with all its wondrous processes—the vineyard, the wine-press, and other appliances—have all been dispensed with, and the same power which said, "Let there be light," called these additional elements together, originated them by his will. The new properties presented themselves to the percipient senses. In this respect the transformation is profoundly different from the supposed change which occurs in the Holy Eucharist. There the accidents and elements all remain; the *substantia* underlying them is supposed to be replaced by another *substantia*; but neither the one nor the other substance has ever been present to the senses. Here a new substance, with previously undiscovered attributes, presents itself. The uncompromising opponents of the supernatural will accept almost any interpretation but that which lies on the surface. The rationalistic, mythical, poetic mystic explanations all alike are encumbered with special difficulties. The evangelist who held Christ to be the Logos incarnate saw nothing inconceivable in the event. It was one of many phenomena which accompanied his life as the "Son of man," which helped to create the underlying presupposition on which the Gospel was written. Like the testimony of the last of the prophets and the earliest of the disciples, it is part of the evidence that the Logos dwelt among us. When the governor tasted wine drawn from these water-pots, and knew not whence it was. He had known all the resources of the feast, but this puzzled him by its novelty. "Whence has it come? Where has it been stored? Whose is it?" An interesting parenthesis is here introduced, to contrast the ignorance of the ruler of the feast with the overwhelming mystery of knowledge given to the servants (the disciples of Jesus himself), [But the servants (*δῆκονοι*) who drew the water knew]; knew, *i.e.*, whence it was and, it seems to me, *what* it was. Meyer and others say they did not know that they had brought wine. It is impossible to assert

as much as this. They knew the plain fact that it was not a wine-vat or wine-cask, but a water-jar, from which they had drawn in order to fill the chalices in their hands. They became, therefore, guarantors of the mysterious sign. How much more than "whence" it was had dawned on their mind we cannot say. The governor of the feast calleth the bridegroom. We may judge from this that this responsible person was not in the room where the six water-jars were placed, and that he either approached the bridegroom in his seat of honour, or called to him from his own, and expressed, by a convivial boast and equivocal compliment, his sense of the excellence of the wine which had thus, at the end of the feast, been lavished on the guests, who had been hitherto kept strangely ignorant of the resources of the host. It is unnecessary to put into the words any meaning deeper than the epigrammatic humour in which he revealed his sense of the reality of the objective fact which had been brought to his knowledge.

Ver. 10.—And saith, Every man at the first setteth on the good wine, and when men have drunk deeply, then that which is worse (*literally, smaller*): thou hast kept (*guarded*) the good wine until now. The classical passages supposed to illustrate this jovial saying throw little light upon it. The meaning is obvious enough, and there is no need to search in ancient wit for the original of a speech which is not too recondite to have been originated on this occasion. The best wine is appropriately given when the senses are keenest, but when the climax of the festival has come, when they have drunk too deeply, or are intoxicated, then the weaker, poorer, and less fragrant wine is acceptable. There need be no reference whatever to the present company. Tholuck and the Revised Version modify the force of *μεθυσθῶσι*; Meyer, Godet, and others see no difficulty in assigning to the word its proper meaning (*cf.* Luke xii. 45; 1 Thess. v. 7; Eph. v. 18; Rev. xvii. 2). The whole saying, simply asserts, by an outsider, the concrete reality of a wonderful change that had occurred. He knew nothing of a miracle. He merely guaranteed unwittingly the phenomena that came within the range of his senses. This becomes more impressive because he knew nothing of the cause, and was profoundly ignorant of the claims of his strange and wonderful Guest. No further remark is offered. We are not told how the fact was referred to the will or authority of Jesus, to the kindness or generosity of the mother; or whether the company generally learned the mysterious powers of their fellow-Guest. The bridegroom thus honoured made no reply that is recorded; and, by emphatic silence, the impression is conveyed

that this manifestation of the power of the Lord was not, in his opinion, the coming of his "hour." Strange reticence is observed, but this is added—

Ver. 11.—Jesus made this beginning of signs in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory. The beginning, the earliest of the tokens which he gave of his higher nature and lofty claims and faculties. The word *σημεία*, corresponding with the Hebrew *otim*, is generally, in the Acts as well as in the LXX., associated with *τέρατα*, or "portents;" when it occurs in the synoptists it is translated "signs." The word by itself does not connote miraculous energies, but any event, natural or human, which becomes a token or witness to unseen or Divine energies. When Christ's wonderful actions (often called *δυνάμεις* by the synoptists) are referred to by John, he calls them simply *ἔργα*; so that operations which, if wrought by other persons, might have been portents, miracles, or marvels, are to him perfectly normal, and are called simply "works." Weiss leaves the question of the manner in which this supply of wine was provided entirely unsettled, but declares that, whether by some fortunate providential opportunity, by the forecast of the mother, or by concealed methods of meeting the exigency, this great gift was brought about by the Son of Mary, the effect was the same as if it had been wrought by the Creator's hand. The glory of his power and love and sympathy was manifested. This appears to us utterly inconsistent with the intention or idea of the evangelist. The impression previously made upon John the Baptist was of his supreme submission to the Divine will, his sacrificial yielding to that will for the taking away of sin; further, that in some sense he was Son of God, and Minister and Organ for the dispensation of the Spirit of God. The few disciples admitted that, by his penetration of their character and hidden inner life, his wisdom was of a different kind from that of men. Now, however, they see a manifestation of his glory as power. He has unlimited resources at his disposal, and his disciples believed on him to that extent. This expression asserts the truth of the selective and discriminating force of the mission of Christ, and the negative fact that the company assembled received no religious impression beyond the most superficial one. "The disciples" who came with him "believed" more than they had done before. It may be that they, especially John and Nathanael of Cana, were among the honorary *διδάκοντες* who were alone fully conscious of what happened on the occasion. They apprehend the "glory," and entirely trust themselves *eis αὐτόν*, to him, and follow him with an added momentum. There are new and wonderful suggestions made in this

passage which unveil the glory of the Divine love and power now wrought in man. A point of connection with the synoptic Gospels is that they too record Christ's own description of the contrast between the austere prophet and the Son of man (Matt. xi. 18, 19) in terms almost taken from this very scene. Compare also the mode in which Christ vindicated his own social freedom from Pharisaic exclusiveness, and the conduct of his own disciples from that of John the Baptist's disciples in the matter of ceremonial purifications, by his parable of the old wine-skins bursting with the new and potent fluid put into them (Matt. ix. 14—17 and parallel passages). John gives here a deeper apprehension of the mystery, a key-note to a whole cycle of instructions, on the "glory" of his love. By manifesting his Divine sympathy with marriage, with human life and fellowship, with innocent gladness, he proves himself to be the same Christ of whom the synoptic tradition speaks, the same Jesus who took the children to his arms, and constituted a "marriage-supper" the great type of the eternal union between God and man in the gospel of his love (cf. Matt. xxii. 2, etc.). But this same evangelist is filled with the same imagery dating back to experiences of Cana, when he describes the final victory of the "Lamb of God" (Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2).

Ver. 12.—After this he went down—from the high lands of Galilee to the borders of the Sea of Galilee, depressed as we now know it to be below the level of the Mediterranean—to Capernaum.<sup>1</sup> Three competing sites for this small town have been advocated by Eastern travellers; all of them on the shore of the lake, all near to Bethsaida and Chorazin, in "the way of the sea," combining more or less the characteristics required by the New Testament narrative and the references in Josephus ('Bell. Jud.,' iii. 10. 8). Keim is in favour of *Khan Minyeh*; but there is no abundant spring such as Josephus describes, nor are there any ruins which indicate an extensive town. Caspari has argued in favour of *Ain Mudawarah*, a mile and a half to the west of *Khan Minyeh*, in which, though water is abundant, there are no remains of buildings. The old travellers, and the most recent explorations, have coincided in fixing on *Tell-Hâm* as the site; and Dr. Farrar, Dr. Westcott, Major Wilson, incline to this conclusion. Abundant ruins are found there, and, what is more than probable,

<sup>1</sup> N, B, X, etc., read *Καπαρναούμ* (so Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Tregelles); but the Revised Version has retained the familiar spelling. It is probably its original form, answering to Arabic *Kepher*, equivalent to "hamlet."

the remains of the very synagogue built by the Roman centurion, and one certainly dating back to the Herodian age. *Tell-Hâm*, or "the Mound of Hâm," is an easy corruption of the *Cuphar*, or village of *Nahûm*. He, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples. They may have returned home to Nazareth, though some recent commentators suggest that Cana had become the home of his family in late years. This is contradicted by the express statement of ch. i. 45, and the utter obliteration of the name of Cana from the synoptic narrative. We cannot identify this possible return to Nazareth with the account in Luke iv. 16-20, because it assumes a previous period of activity in Capernaum, and further, because the commencement of Christ's public ministry is expressly made synchronous with the imprisonment of the Baptist (Matt. iv. 12-15), which did not take place till weeks or months afterwards (ch. iii. 24). Consequently, this journey to Capernaum preceded the journey to Jerusalem and the return to Nazareth, of which Matthew speaks. The fact that "the mother and brethren" of Jesus accompanied him, but not "the sisters," suggests what is implied in Mark vi. 3 that the sisters were married in Nazareth and in Mark iii. 21-23 that they did not accompany the non-believing brothers in their endeavour "to lay hold of him." The fact that Joseph is not mentioned induces the common assumption that he was already dead. Volumes have been written on "the brethren of Jesus." The determination of their parentage is one of the most perplexing points in the evangelic history.<sup>1</sup> There are three hypotheses, which are alike beset with difficulties. (1) The view propounded by Helvidius in Rome, in the fourth century, and to which Jerome replied, that the "brothers" are brothers in the ordinary sense, children of Joseph and Mary. This supposition is sustained by the statement of Matt. i. 25 and Luke ii. 7, each of which implies that the mother of our Lord had other children. The sentiment of the Church in favour of Mary's perpetual virginity, and in favour of the uniqueness of her maternity, has powerfully contested this supposition. Further, apart from any sentiment, it has been said that the Lord would not have commended the mother to the beloved disciple, if he had living brothers who had a

previous claim. To this, however, it is replied that John, the son of Zebedee and Salome, may have been his near relative, if Salome were the sister of the Virgin; and also that, up to the time of the Ascension, there is no proof that the brethren believed in him, but the contrary. The effect of a special manifestation to James (1 Cor. xv.) may have led to a general admission of the brethren, who are distinguished from, but yet *with*, the eleven apostles and the mother on the eve of the Ascension (Acts i. 14). (2) To obviate the difficulties of a sentimental kind, it was suggested by Jerome, and it has been often assumed since, that these brothers were in reality *first cousins*, not the children of Salome the sister of the Virgin, but of Mary the wife of Cleophas, who is supposed to be the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus (see ch. xx. 25, note), and further that this Cleophas = Clopas =  $\kappa\lambda\omicron\phi\alpha\varsigma$  = Alphæus = Chalphi for the Aramaic guttural might be omitted as in Alphæus, or turned into  $\kappa$  or  $\chi$  in *Clopas*, found in John's text. Jerome, however (Lightfoot), never referred to this confirmation of his theory; but it has been hence conjectured that James the son of Alphæus was identical with the celebrated "James the brother of our Lord," mentioned in Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; in Gal. i. 19; ii. 9, 12; and in ecclesiastical history. If, however, this James were the "son of Alphæus," then *Judas* (ch. xiv. 22) (not Iscariot)—"Judas of James" (Jude 1; Acts i. 13)—was also one of the "brethren;" also *Joses* and *Simon*, sons of Cleophas, were of their number; and some have gone further, and made *Simon* the Canaanite the other brother. This might possibly be the solution of the puzzle, if the entire theory did not break down under the clear distinction drawn in evangelic narrative between the twelve apostles and the brethren. *E.g.* in this passage they are discriminated from "disciples." In ch. vii. 5 the "brethren" are said not to believe on the Lord. In Acts i. 14 they are mentioned in addition to the apostles. Though in Gal. i. and ii. James might seem from his great eminence to be classed with apostles in some wider sense, yet in Acts xv. 13; xxi. 18; Gal. ii. 12 he seems to take precedence of *all* the apostles, at the Council of Jerusalem, and in presidency of the Church there. Moreover, the identification of Cleophas with Alphæus is very doubtful. Clopas is Aramaic, Cleophas a Greek name; and the identification of his wife Mary with the sister of the Virgin is also very doubtful; while to have two sisters of the same name in the same family is highly improbable. We cannot believe, further, that so distinguished a man as James the brother of our Lord could have been designated as "James the

<sup>1</sup> The most exhaustive essay on the subject is Bishop Lightfoot's, in his 'Commentary on the Epistle to Galatians,' comp. Professor W. H. Mill, in his 'Observations,' Alford's 'Prolegomena to the Epistle of James,' Archdeacon Farrar, 'Early Days of Christianity,' vol. ii.; Wieseler, in 'Stud. und Krit.' (1840).

Less" in the evangelic narrative (Mark xv. 40). If the "cousin theory" holds, this must have been the case. Finally, "cousins" would hardly so persistently have been spoken of as *brothers*, and this would be still less likely if their mother was living. (3) The third hypothesis, which is the suggestion of Epiphanius, is that these brothers were the children of Joseph by a previous marriage, to whom the blessed Virgin had acted the part of mother. This is based on a legend of the apocryphal 'Protevangel. of James' (ch. ix. and xvii.), where Joseph speaks of his "sons." The theory saves the virginity of Mary, but sacrifices that of Joseph. Such a conclusion, in some ecclesiastical circles, is almost as unwelcome as the former. Against Jerome's hypothesis the greatest number of difficulties present themselves, and it must be abandoned. Therefore the choice really lies between that of Helvidius (1) and that of Epiphanius (3). These are alike encumbered by the perplexity that among the twelve apostles there were two Jameses, two Judases, and two Simons; and among the "brethren" there must have been also a James, Judas, Joses, and Simon, with sisters. Moreover, there was a Joses or Joseph, who was son of Alphæus, and therefore a brother of James. This is not an insuperable difficulty, because of the frequency with which personal names recur in Oriental families. Whether this multiplicity be true or not, there are, at least, ten other Simons in the New Testament, and nearly as many Josephs or Joses; and Judas Barsabas (Acts xv. 22) must be discriminated from the two Judases here supposed. We must, however, choose between suppositions (1) and (3). On the one side, it is said, if the brethren of Jesus were not the own sons of Mary, the language of Jesus on the cross would be entirely explicable. This is true; but, on the other side, if *John* were indeed a blood-relation and beloved disciple (even if James was so also, but did not believe on him), the difficulty of the language is reduced to a minimum. There is no scriptural authority for the Epiphanian theory, but it is made plausible by the 'Gospel according to St. Peter' and the 'Protevangel. Jacobi,' which refer to Joseph's sons. The whole history of its reception in the Church may be seen in the masterly essay of Bishop Lightfoot. The view of Alford, Mill, Farrar, Godet, and many others is in favour of a plain commonsense interpretation of the letter of Scripture. Christ, who honoured marriage by his first display of miraculous power, and this at the suggestion of his own mother, and in the society of those who passed undoubtedly as his brothers, would not feel that the faintest shadow of a shade fell on the lofty purity of his mother by this hypothesis. Certainly

the Evangelist Matthew had not a vestige in him of that adoration of virginity, or Mariolatry, which has led ecclesiastical historians and commentators to reject the Helvidian hypothesis. Godet and some other harmonists endeavour to find, during the residence in Capernaum, the occasion for the first miraculous draught of fishes, and the final call of the two pairs of brothers; but it is excluded by the notes of time subsequently given.

Vers. 12—22.—(2) *The second sign. Supremacy over the theocratic house. Illustrations of righteousness, reverence, power, and sacrificial ministry.*

Vers. 12, 13.—They abode there not many days. And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. The narrative at ver. 22; ch. iii. 22; iv. 1, 27, etc., shows, that some disciples were with him; but there is no reason for believing that the whole group were there. The fact is important that Jesus personally is said (*ἀνέβη*) to have gone up to Jerusalem, and that no reference is made to his disciples, mother, or brethren doing so. This undoubtedly assumes that he was not attended by any compact group of followers. It is more than probable that Simon and James, if not Nathanael and Philip, remained in Galilee to receive their final call in due season. One cannot doubt that John and Andrew were his auditors and witnesses. He went up to utter his prophetic summons to the metropolis of the nation, to take his place in the palace-temple of his Father, in the centre of the old theocracy. After showing his perfect human sympathy, his power over physical nature, his abounding resources, and the glory of his love, he resolved that there should be no misunderstanding of his moral mission, and proceeded to institute a public demonstration of his loyalty to the theocracy, to the temple, and to its worship. Just at the moment when the One who, greater than the temple, was about to display his unique claims to a service which would outlive all the pomp of temple-worship, it was profoundly significant that he should demand from it a right presentation, and not a corrupt defilement, of its true significance. Modern criticism refuses to accept the statements of the synoptists and of John as alike true, and endeavours to explain away one or the other account. We are content to say here that a repetition of the Christ's claim to sanctify the temple was again made on the eve of that awful day when that blood should be shed which would exhaust all the significance of the hecatombs of victims slain in its precincts, and when the veil of the temple should be rent in twain. Weiss here shows that Baur and Hilgenfeld are inconsistent in repudiating the historical character



of an early conflict of Jesus with the authorities at Jerusalem, and that they forget, in their eagerness to demonstrate the anti-Jewish character of the Johannine Christ, that he here is represented as a pious Jew, attending the national festivals and jealous for the honour of the temple. The chronological difficulties that arise if the two cleansings are identified amount to the grossest inaccuracy on the part either of the synoptists or John. Lücke, De Wette, Ewald, treat the synoptists as inaccurate, and John's account, being that of an eye-witness, as the reduction of the event to its proper place in the history. It is obvious that the synoptists (Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58) knew that words which John recounts had, at an earlier period, made a deep impression upon the multitude. The thief on the cross (Matt. xxvii. 38—44), and the insulting crowds (Mark xv. 27—29), and Stephen afterwards (Acts vi. 14), reveal familiarity with an utterance which John alone recounts, but which had been misunderstood. An ingenious writer in the *National Review*, 1857 (Mr. R. H. Hutton, "Theological Essays"), believes, not only that the entire scene in the temple, but that Christ's claim to be the Head of the kingdom, the parables of "wicked husbandmen" and "two sons," and the reference to the "baptism of John," should all be transferred, together with the triumphal entry, to the period in which John has placed the first temple-cleansing. He thinks that the reference to the "baptism of John" was more reasonable at that period than two years after the death of John, and that (Matt. xxi. 11) the reference to "Jesus of Nazareth" was more appropriate at the beginning than at the close of the ministry. But, on the other hand, the inscription on the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth," and the numerous references to the "baptism of John" at a much later date, quite refute this argument. There are those who strenuously assail the historicity of St. John's account, and plead for the greater accuracy of the synoptists (Strauss, Baur, Hilgenfeld, etc.). But, seeing that the synoptic tradition takes no notice of this preliminary ministry, in which our Lord gives specimens of all his powers and glory, no reason presents itself why they should have singled out *one* narrative and misplaced it. So long as John's Gospel is held to have a genuine historicity, his narrative cannot be suffered to be a romantic transposition to meet a preconceived idea of chronological development. The early foreshadowing of the Lord's death and resurrection, coupled with the reference to his being "lifted up" like the serpent of brass, and the cruel treatment received from the people at Nazareth and from scribes and Pharisees at Capernaum, are in living harmony with one

another, and combine to refute the idyllic reproduction of the public ministry, which Renan and many others have attempted to fashion, by which the early life is represented as enacted in one blaze of sunshine, and that its close alone was shrouded in clouds and darkened by the Lord's reckless and suicidal rushing on his fate. We therefore conclude, with numerous critics, that there is (1) no reason to believe that John misplaced the temple cleansing; and (2) that he does not preclude the second act of the like kind recorded in the synoptists; (3) while the synoptists imply occurrences which are detailed in John, but omitted in their narrative, yet the character of the proceeding differs on both occasions.

Ver. 14.—He found in the temple (*ἱερόν*); the vast enclosure, surrounded by colonnades, where the courts of the Gentiles were situated beyond and outside the courts of "the women" and "the priests." Within the latter was the sanctuary (*ναός*), or sacred *adytum*, where the altars of sacrifice and incense faced the veil of the holiest of all. In the court of the temple had been allowed a secular market for sacrificial beasts. An exchange for money was also set up, where Jews were ready to furnish, on usurious terms, the proper coin, the sacred half-shekel (value, one shilling and threepence), in which form alone was the temple-tax received from the provincial visitors or pilgrims from distant lands. No coin bearing the image of Cæsar, or any foreign prince, or any idolatrous symbol then so common, would be allowed in the sacred treasury. So the Lord found those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the exchangers of money sitting; a busy bazaar, deteriorating the idea of the temple with adverse associations. The three sacrificial animals mentioned were those most frequently required. The strangers, doubtless, needed some market where these could be obtained, and where the sufficient guarantee of their freedom from blemish could be secured. It was also indispensable that exchange of coins should have been made feasible for the host of strangers. The profanation effected by transacting these measures in the temple courts was symptomatic of widespread secularism, an outward indication of the corruption of the entire idea of worship, and of the selfishness and pride which had vitiated the solemnity and spirituality of the sacrificial ritual. Geikie has given a very brilliant description of this scene; so also Edersheim, 'Life of Jesus the Messiah.' The money (*κέρμα*) was probably derived from a word (*κείρω*) meaning "to cut," and referred to the minute coins which were required for convenient exchange. The *κόλλυβος*, which gives its name to *κολλυβιστής* of the following verse, is also the name of a

small (*κολοβός*, equivalent to "mutilated") coin used for purposes of exchange. The smaller the coin the better, as the minute differences of weight of the foreign coins would thus be more easily measured.

Ver. 15.—And when he had made a scourge of small cords (*σχοινία* of twisted rushes from the scattered fodder or litter of the cattle). This feature of the Lord's action was not repeated at the close of the ministry. Observe that John singles out this punitive element in the first public appearance of the Lord for especial notice, and adds it to the otherwise resistless force which he was accustomed to wield by the glance of his eye or the tones of his voice. The "scourge," as Godet says, is a symbol, not an instrument. It was in Christ's hands a conspicuous method of expressing his indignation, and augmenting the force of his command, by an indication that he meant to be obeyed there and then. He drove them all out of the temple court (*ἱερόν*); that is, the intrusive sellers of the sacrificial beasts, the herdsmen, and traffickers. Also (*τὰ τε*) the sheep and the oxen, which moved at once in a vast group, turning, fleeing to the great exits; and he poured out on the ground, and with his own hand, the coins<sup>1</sup> of the exchangers (*κολλυβιστῶν*), and overthrew the tables. "Christ had," as Hengstenberg says, "a powerful confederate in the consciences of the offenders." The presentiment of coming revolution and overthrow aided the impression produced by that majestic countenance and commanding glance, manner, and voice, that so often made men feel that they were utterly and absolutely in his power (cf. ch. xviii. 6, note).

Ver. 16.—And he said to those that sold the doves. The vendors of tethered or caged birds were as guilty of profanation as the rest. Some sentimental comments have gathered round this verse, as though the Lord were more tender in his treatment of the turtle-doves than in that of the oxen or sheep. But there would be no meaning in such a distinction. No other way of scattering the doves was so simple as to command their removal. At "the Ammergau Passion-play," the doves are let loose, fly away over the heads of the audience, and disappear. The lifting of the scourge, accompanied, doubtless, with words of solemn warning and command, said in effect what he now put into words. Take these things hence. Make not the house of my Father a house of merchandise. In this act our

Lord simply assumed the rôle of any and every Hebrew prophet. The Talmud enjoins the sanctity for which the Saviour pleads. He called the temple "my Father's house" (cf. Luke ii. 49), and therefore claims especially to be the Son of God Most High. The Eternal, the Holy One of Israel, stands in this mysterious relationship to him. He does not say, "our Father's house." When, however, after the second cleansing of the temple, he spake of the temple, from which he finally withdrew (Matt. xxiii. 38), he called it by no other name than "your house," "left unto you desolate." Moreover, on that subsequent occasion, he used, in place of "house of merchandise," the bitter description, "den of robbers" (Matt. xxi. 13). This first act was reformatory of a gross abuse; the latter was judicial and condemnatory (see Hengstenberg, 'Christology' and 'Comm.,' Zech. xiv. 21; Zeph. i. 11; Mal. iii. 1). Archdeacon Watkins has wisely called attention to the contrast between this scene and sign and that given at Cana. Here we see how true it was that his hour had not yet come.

Ver. 17.—His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thy house will consume<sup>1</sup> me. The future tense, affirmed by the best manuscripts, never (Meyer) bears the present meaning. The disciples, familiar with the Old Testament, remembered at the time the words of Ps. lxi. 9. In that psalm the theocratic Sufferer approached the climax of his sorrows, and admitted that a holy zeal for God's house will ultimately consume him—eat him up. The word is used for consuming emotions (cf. Aristotle, 'Vespæ,' 287), and there is a foreshadowing of the reproach and agony which will befall the righteous Servant of God in his passion for God's honour. The parallelism of the second clause of the verse, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me," confirm the application, though the words are not cited. Several other citations are made in the New Testament from this psalm, which, whether it be Messianic in the oracular sense or not, is clearly one that furnished the mind of the early Church with abundant illustration of the suffering of the Christ (Rom. xv. 3, xi. 9, 10; Acts i. 20; cf. also Ps. lxi. 21 with the narrative of the Crucifixion). Thomas labours to find in the Old Testament prophecies generally the true source of the Johannine narrative. He points to Hos. vi. 5; Mal. iii. 11; Jer. xxv. 29.

Ver. 18, 19.—The Jews therefore answered

<sup>1</sup> The T.R. reads *τὸ κέρμα*, with N, A, P, Γ, etc., Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Bala Revisers; but R.T. and Tregelles have adopted *τὰ κέρματα*, with B. and some other manuscripts.

<sup>1</sup> *Καταφάγεται* -με is read by recent editors, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Westcott and Hort, R.T., with all the uncial manuscripts, as against *κατέφαγέ* -με of T.R.

and said to him. That which the disciples thought at the very time is here recorded by one who affects at least to know their inmost minds and most confidential meditations and talk with one another. John, at least, saw the rising storm of enmity already hurdling, but says nothing. Nevertheless, as if in reply to the imperial prophetic act (which corresponded with John the Baptist's prediction of One who would come axe in hand), the Jews approached with answer (cf. for this use of the word "answer," Matt. xi. 25; Acts iii. 12; Mark xi. 14). The "answer" here is in the form of a question, which shows that they had not recognized the sign he had already given, that this temple was his "Father's house," and that he had solemnly claimed the authority of "Son" over the house. What sign showest thou, because (or, seeing that) thou doest these things? (cf. Matt. xii. 38, etc.; ch. vi. 30). Thou art bound to give us some "sign" that thou hast a right to deal thus with established customs and to assume the position of a public reformer. Upon what does thine (*ἐξουσία*) authority rest? Give us some miraculous proof of these high assumptions, "seeing that (*quatenus*) thou art doing these things," whose consequences are now so conspicuous. It might be supposed that the extraordinary effect just produced upon the crowd of traffickers was sufficient proof of power, if not of authority. The Jews were within their right in asking for these authentications; but their continuous demand for outward signs is one of the conspicuous features of their character (Matt. xii. 38; 1 Cor. i. 22). In the fundamental nature of a "sign" there is a hint of the true solution of the enigmatical saying which is the first public utterance of our Lord. He gave to the act which he was about to perform the characteristic of a "sign." It would be an outward and visible manifestation of a stupendous spiritual event. This, among other reasons, refutes the modern speculation of Herder, Ewald, Lücke, Renan, and even of Neander, Geikie, and others, that the evangelist was wrong in the explanation of this remarkable saying which he offered in the twenty-first verse. John, who, better than modern commentators can do, ought to have known what the Lord meant, declares that Jesus was speaking of "the temple of his body" when, as the context shows, he was vindicating his right to cleanse the existing temple; and by τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, "this sanctuary," he was also pointing to and referring in some sense to the temple structure in the midst of which he and the Jews were standing. The commentators have said, "John was wrong, and was led astray by his own fancies. There was no reference to the death or resurrection

of Christ. The Lord meant," say they, "as follows: 'Persist in your lawless, irreverent, unbelieving treatment of the temple, and so destroy it. Let it cease by this handling of yours from being a temple, and I will prove my right to cleanse it, and to reform, rebuke, or condemn your immoral practices in it, by building it again, or rather erecting a spiritual temple, a temple without hands, and in three days, i.e. in a short time after you have consummated your impiety, I will complete my restorative work—I will build a new temple and fill it with my glory.'" If John had not appended the twenty-first verse, "Howbeit he spake concerning the temple of his body," the above interpretation would deserve very close attention and perhaps acceptance. But there are sundry difficulties in it, even if the evangelist had not supplied the true key:—e.g. Christ does not say, "I will raise up 'another' temple or a 'spiritual' temple on the ruins of the old;" but "I will raise it up," viz. the temple which I challenge you to "destroy." Though ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις, "in three days," is used in this indefinite sense, in Hosea (vi. 2, LXX.), yet it is the accepted term for the period of three days, which counted from the death to the resurrection of the Lord, and which in the synoptic Gospels (Matt. xii. 40) is distinctly foretold to be the great "sign" given to that generation. Moreover, from the Jewish misunderstanding of the words which appear in the synoptic narrative, viz. διὰ τριῶν ἡμέρων, "during three days," the literal character of the time specified had laid hold, not only of the disciples, but of the multitude. Again, the erection of the spiritual temple would not be an outward and visible sign of the grace and authority of the Lord; but rather the great spiritual reality itself—invisible indeed, and requiring signs to manifest and demonstrate its own occurrence and existence. We conclude, then, that the apostle knew better than his critics, and that we are to believe that, when the Lord said to the Jews, Destroy (*λύσατε*, dissolve, break up) this temple, "he was speaking of the temple of his body," and at the same time linking and identifying the two temples, relating the one to the other so closely that the destruction of his body became *ipso facto* the demolition of the temple character of the building where they then stood. The temple of stone and gold, of stately decoration and ceremonial, derived all its true meaning from its being the gorgeous crystallization of a Divine idea embodied in his life. The temple had no value save as a meeting-place for God and man, where by sacrifice and worship man might approach the Father, who declared himself to be reconciled, long-suffering, and yet just. The Lord has come to the temple, but was himself

One holier and "greater than the temple." *God* is manifested in the glory of that holy life, and *man* is set forth also in Christ's perfect high-priestly approach to and commerce with the excellent glory. The Lord knows that he is the Lamb, and the only begotten Son of God, and he knows also that his death is part of the awful method in which the vast designs of his righteous love will be secured. He has a baptism to be baptized with, and he is straitened until it be accomplished. He anticipates the end. As he said afterwards to Judas, "*That thou doest do quickly;*" so at this moment he said, *Destroy this temple (of my body), and you will destroy therein the temple character of this historic embodiment of a grand prophetic hope; and I will raise it up, viz.—the temple of my body—in three days (not, I will raise it by quiet, unobserved, spirit-processes in the souls of men, but) the very temple which you will bring down shall henceforth be the living and eternal temple of all the glory of God and all the possibilities of man.* The great bulk of expositors of many types, who do not repudiate St. John's own words, see thus (with more or less of a double reference in it) the first main significance of the enigma. Whether our Lord pointed to his own Person as he uttered these words cannot be determined. It is said by some—If he had done so, all ambiguity would have been removed, and the misunderstanding which followed would have been impossible! Surely the Jews were not usually ready to receive parabolic truth of this kind so readily, and after their fashion were almost sure to misconceive and falsely to misrepresent it. Even the disciples did not see into its meaning until after the Resurrection (ver. 22). How could they? Verily, then, and not till then, was it seen that the sign of the Prophet Jonas had been given to that generation.

Vers. 20, 21.—The immediate reference of the words to the building before them was only one of a thousand misapplications of the words of Jesus. The seeds of truth which his words contain would take root in after-days. Meanwhile the Jews answered and said—taking the obvious and literal sense of the words, and treating them with an ill-concealed irony, if not scott, to which our Lord made no reply.—In forty and six years was this temple built as we see it to-day. This is one of the most important chronological data for the life of our Lord. Herod the Great, according to Josephus ('Ant.,' xv. 11. 1), commenced the rebuilding of the second temple in the autumn of the eighteenth year of his reign. We find that his first year reckoned from Nisan, A.U.C. 717—718. Consequently, the eighteenth year must have commenced between

Nisan, A.U.C. 734—735 and 735—736. The forty-sixth year after this would make the Passover at which this speech was delivered—the spring of A.U.C. 781 (Wieseler, 'Chron. Synopsis of the Four Gospels,' translation; and Herzog, 'Encyc.,' xxi. 546. The fact that Josephus, in his 'Bell. Jud.,' i. 21, gives the fifteenth year of Herod's reign instead of the eighteenth, is shown by Wieseler to be an error of the transcriber, see p. 152, note), which, if we compare with the other hints, is a fixed point from which to reckon the birth-year and death-year of our Lord. The "about thirty years old" of the Lord at his baptism throws us to about A.U.C. 751, B.C. 2, for the year of his birth, and if there be only one Passover mentioned in John's Gospel between this and the last Passover, it gives A.U.C. 783 for the year of his death. This date is at least coincident with the date derived from the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, as that of the commencement of the mission of John (see my examination of these dates in appendix to 'John the Baptist'). The temple which Herod began to repair in the eighteenth year of his reign was not completed until A.D. 64, under Herod Agrippa II., a very short period before its utter destruction. The irony and scorn are manifest: *Wilt thou raise it up in three days?* John shows, in ver. 21, that, in the deep sense in which our Lord used the words, he abundantly justified his promise. But he—*ἐκεῖνος*, the Lord, not the people, not the disciples—spoke of the temple of his body. This is the reflection which was made upon the word of Jesus by the evangelists in after-days. Even Mark (xiv. 58) reveals the presence of a spiritual interpretation of the words by some of his unsympathetic listeners. It must not be forgotten that, in the synoptists, we find the presence of the idea that his service was a temple-service, and that he was greater than the temple (Matt. xii. 6; cf. also Heb. iii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27; vi. 15; Rom. xii. 5; Eph. iv. 12; i. 22, 23; with ii. 19—22). Nor must it be forgotten that the Logos itself was, in the figurative language of Philo, spoken of as the house, or temple, of God. Later rabbinical representations also describe "the body of man as the temple in which the Shechinah operates" (Wünsche). A difficulty arises from the Lord's having claimed in these words to be on the point of raising himself from the dead, whereas elsewhere his resurrection is referred to the mighty power of God, as in ver. 22; Acts ii. 24; iii. 15; iv. 10; Rom. iv. 24; viii. 11; Gal. i. 1; Eph. i. 20, etc. Without doubt, God and the Father, the Supreme Power, was thus seen in living activity; but the Divine nature of Christ not infrequently so steps forward into his

consciousness that he can say, "I and the Father are one;" and (ch. x. 17, 18) "I will lay down my life that I may take it again" (cf. Eph. iv. 8—10).

Ver. 22.—When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this (to them<sup>1</sup>), and believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus said. This frequent contrast instituted by the apostle between the first impression produced on the disciples (himself among them) and that which was produced by subsequent reflection after the resurrection of Jesus and gift of the Spirit, becomes a powerful mark of authenticity (compare the passages which Godet has here cited, ch. iv. 32, 35; vii. 39; xi. 12; xii. 16, 33; xiii. 28; with many others). "A pseudo-John imagining, in the second century, this ignorance of the apostle in regard to a saying which he had invented himself, is 'criticism' dashing itself against moral impossibility." These quiet "asides" and reflections of the biographer on the mistaken ideas which he cites and corrects, are of consummate value, as pointing out the stages by which the most stupendous ideas that have taken human spirits captive dawned on the most susceptible minds. The "Word" and the "Scripture" helped the disciples to subsequent faith. Why is "Scripture" in the singular, seeing that John used this form of expression ten times when he had one definite passage of Scripture in his mind, and used the plural when the general authority of Scripture was appealed to? Many have looked to one or another definite Scripture text supposed to predict the resurrection of Christ, such as Ps. xvi. 10 and Isa. liii. (some, very wrongly, to Hos. vi. 2, where no reference can be established to this great event). Dr. Moulton points back to Ps. lxix., and the impression which the Lord's "zeal" had produced on the disciples. It seems better to recall Christ's own words, and the comment of Luke, in xxiv. 25—27, where the whole Scripture seems to have been laid under contribution to establish the grand expectation. Further, cf. ch. xx. 9, where John, referring to the same subject, uses the word *γραφῇ* in the singular, for the general tendency of Scripture. All the passages which couple suffering and apparent defeat with triumph and victory, did prepare the mind of thoughtful men for the better understanding of the Resurrection. Thus Ps. xxii. and the closing words of Ps. lxxxix.; cx.; and Isa. liii. thereupon come into view; and, in fact, all the Scriptures

which anticipate the glorious reign and victory of the Christ and the extension of his kingdom, when coupled with those which portrayed the sorrows of Messiah and of the ideal Sufferer, implicitly convey the same thought. Consequently, numerous passages in Isaiah, Micah, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi, with Ps. ii. and lxxii., xlv., etc., taken in connection with prediction of the sorrows of Messiah, did prepare the disciples to believe that the Holy One could not be holden by the pangs of death (Acts ii. 24, etc.). Before closing this paragraph, we must notice that, in this entire transaction, the Lord is not separating himself from the existing theocracy, but interpreting its highest meaning. In the cleansing of the temple at the last he was judging and condemning. The vindication by our Lord of his own action was very different on the latter occasion from what it is here (cf. John ii. 16 with Mark xi. 17), and numerous other accompaniments are profoundly different; nor did he then speak of the destruction of the temple, although, as we have seen, much exaggerated and misapprehensive talk concerning him had been floating among the people (Matt. xxvi. 61).

Ver. 23.—ch. iii. 2.—(3) *Numerous signs in Jerusalem, with their twofold effects.*

Ver. 23.—A new paragraph is commenced here. The conversation with Nicodemus is prefaced by a very remarkable summary of facts, and a hint of principles of action, which are intended to throw light on the great discourse, which bears the same kind of relation to St. John's Gospel that the sermon on the mount does to St. Matthew's Gospel. It is a compendium of the Christian faith. The very fulness and sufficiency of it suggests the doubt of its authenticity. Is not the Lord's reticence on other occasions, and even his enigmatic, parabolic methods of teaching, in decided contrast with the abundance of the revelations with which Nicodemus was favoured? We are tempted to ask—What was the evangelist's source of information? The only reply that seems to me rational is that John himself was the auditor of this discourse, and has preserved it for the edification and solace of the world. The disciple whom Jesus loved never left him, but was perpetually drinking in his words, and, with a genuine Hebrew retentiveness, preserved them intact; at all events, he so reproduced the leading ideas of the conversation. This is, we maintain, a far more scientific treatment of the authorities than the hypothesis of a Johannist of the second century having gathered up and idealized the synoptic records of the scribes, who, by sundry questions, brought forth from the Lord some of his most characteristic teaching. Thoma urges that we have here a

<sup>1</sup> The *αὐτοῖς* of T.R., which rests on very slight authority, is omitted by the critical editors, to the great improvement of the sense.

spiritual *rechauffé* of "the rich young man," of "the lawyer," and of the story of Paul, himself a Pharisee, when finally convinced that he needed a new creation and a spiritual life! First of all, then, we have the place, general period, and specific time referred to: Now when he was in Jerusalem—not the temple, but in the houses and streets, and perhaps suburbs, of Jerusalem (Ἱερουσαλῶμοις, the plural form used generally in the Gospel, while Ἱερουσαλήμ is used in the Revelation in symbolic sense)—at the Pass-over; a period generally covering nine or ten days of celebration, extending from the first purifying of the houses from all leaven and the drawing of pure water on the thirteenth Nisan, the paschal meal on the fourteenth Nisan, the feasts in the evenings of the great days of convocation, fifteenth and twenty-first of the month, and the ceremonies of the intervening six days. In the feast must refer to one or other of the great days of convocation, worship, and feasting. Many believed on his Name; i.e. on his Messiahship, rather than on himself, as their Prophet, Purifier, self-sacrificing Priest, or than on himself as Lamb of God or Son of God. They accepted on easy terms, with a fickle and perhaps eager fanaticism, the first impression produced by him when they saw the signs which he was making of his heavenly mission and nature. We must conclude, therefore, that he did in many ways partially unveil himself. Nicodemus heard of these "signs," and referred them to a Divine commission. John does not here, nor elsewhere, say what these signs were—whether they consisted of effects produced on nature or on men, whether they were deeds of healing, or of moral compulsion, or repression, or reformation. Great expectations with reference to a coming Christ had been excited in the breasts of tens of thousands by John the Baptist's fiery ministry. The result was that men now flocked to Jesus in greater numbers than they had done to him (ch. iii. 26). The faith that they exercised was neither deep nor appreciative, yet it was worthy of the name of faith.

Vers. 24, 25.—But Jesus did not (imperfect) trust himself to them; not even to those who had "trusted on his Name." This remarkable expression corresponds with many actions and methods of Jesus. When he was offered the homage of devils, he forbade them to speak. When those who had been simply healed of bodily disease began garrulously to proclaim his praises, he silenced them. He had no faith in their faith, and consequently did not open to them more of his nature; still less did he

assume, as they would have liked him to do, an immediate and outward Messiahship of political revolt. He did not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, and often made use of the smallest remnant of spiritual apprehension; but even in Galilee, when they would by force have made him a king, "he sent the multitudes away." The apparently arbitrary permission given to others to proclaim his Name (as, e.g., to the healed demoniac of Gergesa, Luke viii. 39; cf. ix. 57—62) suggests the precise inquiry which John had felt from the first Jerusalem visit, and which, with profound insight, he thus meets: "He did not trust himself to them," owing to the fact that he knew—(γινώσκων by apperceptive and continuous processes)—all (*men*) persons. He penetrated their thoughts, discerned their character, saw the meaning of their faith, the burden of their wishes, the regal passions that consumed them—he knew all. And also because he had no need that any should testify what was in (the) man; for he himself—without such aid—knew what was in (the) man. The definite articles here may either restrict the meaning to the men who happened one by one to come under his searching glance (ch. vii. 51; Meyer), or it may mean "man" generically, "human nature" in all its peril, weakness, and self-deception. Geikie ('Life of Christ,' i. 508) gives a novel, though entirely indefensible, translation: "He needed not that any should bear witness respecting him as man." The better and more accurate translation is the first; but since his glance is universal and contact with souls continuous—man by man—the statement thus embraces even *more than* is involved in the generic sense. The knowledge of man (*homo*) "generically" would not embrace his individualities—would leave out the specialities of each case. The particularism of Christ's penetrative glance gives the stronger and better explanation of the reserve of Christ in dealing with these half-believers, than the generic or rather universal knowledge which is supposed to be involved. N.B.—(1) There is a so-called faith to which Christ will *not* unveil himself—will not give himself. (2) The great reward of faith *in* Christ is the faith of Christ. (3) Faith in the Name of Christ, produced now by "signs," real or artificial, fictitious or sacramental, mystic, or miraculous, or æsthetic, by *sortes Biblicæ*, or exaggerated ideas of special providence, is not comparable to the faith in Christ himself, which the truth about him excites. (4) It is to the latter rather than to the former that the golden gates of the heart of Jesus are opened.

## HOMILETICS.

**Vers. 1—11.—The first miracle.** It took place on “the third day;” that is, the third day from the place—fifty miles away—where Nathanael had met Jesus. The Lord had then displayed his omniscience, and he now displays his omnipotence.

**I. THE SCENE OF THE MIRACLE.** “Cana of Galilee.” 1. *This was a small village, about three hours’ journey from Nazareth*, rather insignificant in its history, for it is not named in the Old Testament nor in Josephus. 2. *The miracle occurred, not upon the highway of the village*, but in the comparative privacy of the family circle. 3. *The house was probably occupied by persons known to Jesus*, if not related to his mother Mary by ties of affinity; for Mary was there, evidently with a view to the marriage; and may have superintended its social arrangements. The directions she gave to the servants sanction this view.

**II. THE OCCASION OF THE MIRACLE.** “There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee.” 1. *The presence of Christ suggests the honour of matrimony.* (1) He had no sympathy with those “forbidding to marry” (1 Tim. iv. 3). The Holy Spirit afterwards said, “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled” (Heb. xiii. 4). (2) Christ’s presence is essential still to a happy wedding. (3) His presence does not, as Roman Catholics say, turn marriage into a sacrament. That requires a word of institution, of which there is no trace in this history. 2. *It is allowable to rejoice on such occasions.* Our Lord sanctions by his presence both the marriage and the feast.

**III. THE NECESSITY FOR THE MIRACLE.** “And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.” The supply of wine may have failed (1) *either because of the unexpectedly large addition to the company*, caused by the arrival of Jesus and his five disciples; (2) *or, because the feast may have been protracted*, according to custom, for a week; (3) *or, perhaps, from the humble circumstances of the bride and bridegroom.*

**IV. MARY’S APPEAL TO CHRIST.** “They have no wine.” 1. *She appeals to her Son*, not, perhaps, so much because the deficiency of the wine was caused by his arrival at Cana with his five disciples, but because she evidently expected him to exercise his superhuman power to meet the unexpected need. This seems evident (1) from the facts related by his disciples as to the recent events in Judæa—the Baptist’s declaration, the miraculous baptism-scene, the proof of his supernatural knowledge in the case of Nathanael; (2) from the presence of disciples who had gathered round him; (3) but, above all, from her own recollection of the marvels of his birth. 2. *There is nothing in her appeal to her Son to justify the Roman Catholic argument* in favour of the Virgin Mary’s intercession in heaven, because (1) it does not follow that, because the prayers of living saints are answered on earth, therefore the prayers of dead saints will be either heard or answered in heaven; (2) the rebuke that our Lord administers to his mother does not strengthen the argument in favour of the prayers of dead saints.

**V. CHRIST’S ANSWER TO HIS MOTHER’S APPEAL.** “What have I to do with thee, woman?” 1. *This language implies no want of respect for his mother*, because the term “woman” is the same which he addresses to her in his dying moments, “Woman, behold thy son!” (ch. xix. 26). Yet this mode of address implies a change of relationship between Jesus and Mary. She was no longer “mother,” but “woman.” We see the trace of this change in the memorable question, “Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?” (Matt. xii. 46). 2. *The language implies that the period of subjection to Joseph and Mary was now at an end*, that he is now “the Servant of Jehovah,” that his work as the Messiah has at last begun. 3. *His further reply, “Mine hour is not yet come,” does not imply a refusal of her request*, but only a postponement of the time for working the miracle. He would hold in his own hands the supreme disposal of his power.

**VI. THE REALITY OF THE MIRACLE.** The water was turned into wine. He who can create the grape can create the wine. He who can create matter can easily change it from one kind to another. The reality of this miracle is attested: 1. *By the evidence of the servants who knew what the water was.* 2. *By the evidence of the ruler of the feast as to what it became.* There was no visible action in this case interposing between the miracle-worker and his remarkable “sign.”

VII. THERE IS NOTHING INCONSISTENT WITH THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST IN HIS REPLENISHING THE SUPPLY OF WINE. Those who maintain that the wine created by miracle was unfermented, and, therefore, unintoxicating, ought to know: 1. *That there is no such thing as unfermented wine.* 2. *That it is no more inconsistent with Christ's character to create wine than to create the grape;* yet the grape was created with a full knowledge of its properties. 3. *That while there is nothing in Scripture to justify the statement that it is a sin to drink wine,* the argument from expediency asserted by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. viii. 13) ought to have a conclusive weight with Christian people in the way of justifying a total abstinence from strong drink.

VIII. THE OBJECT OF THE MIRACLE AT CANA. "It manifested forth his glory." It proved that, because "the Father loveth the Son," he hath "given all things into his hand" (ch. iii. 35). The apostles manifested the glory of Jehovah in their miracles; Jesus manifested his own.

IX. THE RESULT OF THIS MIRACLE. "And his disciples believed on him." They believed as they had never done before; their faith was strengthened; they saw fresh evidence of his Divine nature and Divine power; and, no doubt, had "joy and peace in believing."

Ver. 12.—*The transition between private and public life.* Before our Lord entered on his public life at Jerusalem, he goes back, as it were, for a moment into the retirement of his family.

I. THE SCENE OF OUR LORD'S VISIT. "After this he went down to Capernaum."

1. *It was the Jewish capital of Galilee,* down upon the Sea of Tiberias, an important place of commerce. 2. *It became, after Nazareth, the home of Jesus.* (Matt. iv. 13.) It is called "his own city" (Matt. ix. 1). On the occasion of the present visit he had come directly from Nazareth, after the Cana miracle. 3. *It was a city honoured by the working of many miracles;* yet, notwithstanding, distinguished by a most perverse unbelief. "Thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be cast down to hell" (Matt. xi. 23). 4. *It is now a ruin, identified as Tell-Hâm.*

II. THE OCCASION AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS VISIT. It has a double aspect so far as it relates to Christ's relatives and to his disciples. "His mother and brethren are still with him, attached merely by nature; his disciples newly attached by faith."

1. *Christ recognized the tender ties of kinship.* He allowed his mother and his brothers—though they did not yet believe in him—to enjoy the satisfaction of his society for a time before his entrance upon his public ministry. (1) The ties of nature are not superseded by the ties of grace. (2) The ties of nature may themselves be strengthened by the ties of grace. These brethren of Christ, though now in unbelief, are afterwards found as disciples of Christ (Acts i. 14). We ought to love all our relatives in Christ. 2. *Christ definitely called the disciples to the apostleship during this visit.* This is evident from Matt. x. 1. The call was followed by the miraculous draught of fishes. The disciples were henceforth to follow Christ for ever.

Vers. 13—22.—*Christ in the temple.* He went up straightway to the Passover at Jerusalem, for he honoured every ordinance of the old dispensation so long as it lasted.

I. THE ACT OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE. His ministry must open in the temple, which was the sanctuary of Judaism, and it must open with an act of holiness rather than a display of power. 1. *His attitude was the subject of prophecy.* "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple . . . he shall purify the sons of Levi" (Mal. iii. 1—3). 2. *It was quite in keeping likewise with the character of him of whom the Baptist said, "Whose fan is in his hand"* (Matt. iii. 12). Christ was about to vindicate the sanctity of his Father's house by cleansing out the rabble of money-changers and dealers.

II. THE TIME OF THIS ACT—THE PASSOVER. As one of the great feasts of the Jews, it attracted to Jerusalem the entire people of the country, in their ecclesiastical relationships. His hour was now come.

III. THE ACT ITSELF. As to sellers of oxen and sheep and doves, and money-changers, "he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables." 1. *It was an act of supreme courage.* The dominant hierarchy, corrupt and faithless as it was, was sup-



ported by the public opinion of Jerusalem, and might have crushed this zealot on the spot. Yet our Lord proceeds with the utmost deliberation to the work of purifying the temple with the "whip of cords" in his hand, not wielded as an instrument of offence, but as a symbol of authority. He has, no doubt, the consciousness of a supernatural force that could be put forth in case of need. 2. *It was an act of holy zeal.* "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." (1) Eighteen years before he said to his parents, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke ii. 49). He now shows his first concern was for the honour of his Father's house. (2) Our Lord was indignant because the Jews had made the temple their own house, and desecrated it by making it the instrument of their sordid interests. (3) He asserts his Divinity in the act of defending the honour of his Father's house. "He is sustained by the consciousness of his dignity as Son, and his duty as the Messiah." 3. *He was supported in his act by the very conscience of the Jews themselves, who knew that he was right and they were wrong.*

IV. THE EFFECT OF THIS ACT. It had a double effect. 1. *Consider its effect upon the disciples.* (1) It suggested an Old Testament prophecy: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (Ps. lxi.). This implies the familiar acquaintance of the disciples with the Scriptures. (2) It ministered to their faith. The act of Jesus was in their eyes a sign of Divine holiness. They only understood the true meaning of his words after he had risen from the dead; but "they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." It was the office of the Holy Spirit to bring such words to their recollection. 2. *Consider its effect upon the Jews.* As soon as they had recovered from the surprise of this sudden act, they began to question its authority. "What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" (1) The question implies that they conceded the lawfulness of his act. But they thought it just to demand his warrant for an act of such independent authority. (2) Our Lord's answer to their question. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (a) The words were naturally taken by the Jews to refer to the temple he had just cleansed. The false witnesses of Christ on his final trial, and Stephen's accusers, remembered the saying in its literal application (Matt. xxvi. 61; Acts vi. 14). (b) But the apostle refers them to "the temple of his own body," which would in three days be raised up again. The apostolic comment is decisive as to their true meaning. But what connection could there be between the temple and his body? (a) The destruction of the temple was to come about by the slaying of the Messiah: "The Messiah shall be cut off . . . and the people of a prince who shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. ix. 26). The death of the Messiah ends the temple; the veil of the temple is rent; there is no more to be a holy place, a priesthood, a sacrifice. The destruction of the temple was destined to be in Christ's person: "On his body the fatal blow struck by the hand of the Jews would fall, which would lay the sanctuary in ruins." (b) The restoration of the temple is to come likewise through his body raised from the dead. "The Messiah perishes: the temple falls. The Messiah lives again: the true temple rises on the ruins of the symbolical." (3) The Jews' rejoinder to our Lord's statement. "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" There is a spirit of raillery in the question. But our Lord gave no answer to their sneering question. It was his habit to deal with men according to what he saw was the state of their hearts.

Vers. 23—25.—*Our Lord's work in Jerusalem.* After the temple incident, there seemed to be a disposition upon the part of the people to accept him.

I. MARK THE PUBLICITY OUR LORD GIVES TO HIS MISSION. "When he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast." He selected a time when he could put himself in contact with the whole nation gathered to one of their annual feasts. He must show himself to "Israel," and not only to the people of its capital. He must come "unto his own," whether they will accept him or reject him.

II. MARK THE WIDESPREAD MOVEMENT IN HIS FAVOUR. "Many believed in his Name, when they saw the miracles which he did." 1. *The nature of their belief.* (1) They did not believe with the heart, but with the understanding. There is a great difference between mere intellectual belief, in which, as in the case of the devils, the will is not implicated, and the saving faith which includes alike the acts of intellect,

will, and heart. (2) They did not trust in his Person, but believed in his miracles. They "believed in his Name" as the Messiah. They recognized his title to Messiahship. 2. *The ground of their belief.* "When they saw the miracles which he did." (1) There is no detailed account of these miracles in this Gospel. It is evident that our Lord performed a vastly greater number of miracles than are described in the Gospels (ch. xx. 30). (2) The belief of these Jews arose out of astonishment at the prodigies of Divine power witnessed by them. (a) Yet it did not spring out of any previous preparations of the heart, and did not lead to any definite or permanent result of a spiritual nature. (b) Their belief, after all, nominal as it was, was better than the utter unbelief of the Pharisees and scribes after they had witnessed the signs and wonders of the Lord.

III. MARK CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THESE MERELY NOMINAL DISCIPLES. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them." 1. *He was not elated by their ready acceptance of him.* 2. *He "had no faith in their faith,"* and, accordingly, he either withheld from them the fuller instruction intended for disciples, or withdrew from them into the more congenial society of those who were "disciples indeed." 3. *Mark the reason of this conduct.* "Because he knew all men." (1) Ministers of the gospel are often deceived in their estimates of men; but Christ cannot be deceived. (2) He does not need human testimony to guide him into true estimates of character. We are all more or less dependent, in this matter, upon such external help. (3) His omniscient discernment of man's inner life made it impossible he should be deceived in his knowledge of men. (4) It is a solemn thought that our Lord "pondereth the hearts of men;" that is, he weighs them, (a) not in the scales of worldly estimation, (b) but in the scale of heavenly realities. This thought ought to humble us in the deepest self-abasement in his sight.

### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

**Vers. 1—11.—Jesus and social life.** Public men are sometimes anxious with regard to a first appearance, that it should be upon a scene, in society, and with accompaniments worthy of themselves or of their own conceptions of themselves. Jesus proved his superiority to human vanity and weakness in performing his first "sign" in a lowly home at a villager's wedding. His conduct in this was just like himself.

I. THE LORD JESUS WAS OPPOSED TO ASCETICISM. Religion and asceticism are often in the popular mind associated; and pretenders have often taken advantage of the association. Even true prophets, like Elijah and John the Baptist, have had a strain of asceticism in their nature, a vein of asceticism in their life. And vigorous sects, like the Essenes, have sometimes gained a reputation and an influence by a self-denying life led for self-denial's sake. In Christian times again and again this principle has sprung into prominence, and has exercised immense power over society. One thing is clear, that Jesus had no sympathy with isolation, unsociableness, austerity.

II. THE LORD JESUS FREQUENTED ALL KINDS OF HUMAN SOCIETY. He dined with Pharisees and with publicans with an impartial sociability. He does not seem to have refused invitations to partake hospitality, from whatever quarter they might come. It was a complaint brought against him by the formalists, that he was "gluttonous, a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners." This was untrue; but it points to a truth, viz. that our Lord had no aversion to social gatherings. He frequented the society of men, in order to diffuse his influence and his doctrine; and chiefly that men might see and hear and know him, and through him the grace of God.

III. THE LORD JESUS ENCOURAGED HIS DISCIPLES TO MIX FREELY WITH THEIR FELLOW-MEN. There were at this period but few of them—perhaps five; and this was an early stage of their discipleship. But there was something for them to learn at the marriage-feast; and, as the narrative tells us, the experience was most profitable to themselves. At the same time, there was a lesson regarding their own mission and the methods of its fulfilment, which more or less they acquired by participating in such social gatherings as these. They were to learn that those who would be spiritual helpers of men must first be, and prove themselves to be, their friends.

IV. THE LORD JESUS SANCTIONED LOVE AND MARRIAGE. Society is not possible  
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apart from family life; and it is not a good sign of the morals of a community when men's social enjoyments are disconnected from virtuous women and from holy homes. It is universally acknowledged that Christ has exalted woman to her rightful and intended position; and it has not generally been considered how largely this effect has been owing to our Lord's treatment, first of his own mother, and secondly of the bride of Cana, on this occasion. The domestic relations should form the nucleus, so to speak, of the social life of humanity. They are the true and Divine antidote to man's selfishness and passions. And Christ teaches us that pleasure is to be found, not only in the world, in the society of the profligate, but in that home-life, those sacred relations, which are too generally regarded as associated with disappointment, cheerlessness, and misery.

V. **THE LORD JESUS APPROVED AND PROMOTED INNOCENT FESTIVITY.** In his provision of wine for the wedding-feast, we observe that Jesus did two things. 1. He gave his friends what was not an absolute necessity, but an enjoyment, a luxury. The guests might have drunk water, but the Divine Friend did not choose that they should be compelled to do so. He gives us better gifts than we deserve, if not better than we desire. 2. He gave his friends abundance, more than enough for the occasion. There was a supply for future need. It is thus that he reveals the liberality of his heart and the munificence of his provision.—T.

Vers. 1—11.—*Jesus and the marriage-state.* Of the services which our Lord Christ has rendered to human society, none is more conspicuous and undeniable than the honour which he has put upon marriage. Of all institutions and relations existing among men, there is none which has met with so much slander, hate, and scorn, as matrimony. The sinful and the selfish, not content with avoiding marriage themselves, overwhelm those who honour and enter upon wedded life with ridicule and contempt. This is not to be wondered at, inasmuch as true and honourable marriage involves abstinence from unlawful pleasures, and also a fidelity and constancy of affection amidst the changes, responsibilities, and troubles incident to this estate. From the narrative before us, and other instances in our Saviour's life and teaching, we learn that Christ commands, sanctions, and hallows matrimony for many sufficient reasons.

I. **AS TENDING TO HONOUR WOMANHOOD.** Those who disparage wedded life are usually found to take a base view of the feminine sex, to regard women rather as instruments of sensual pleasure than as the honourable companions of men. The true wife takes a position which not only ennoble herself, but raises her sex. In this respect marriage is in complete opposition to concubinage and polygamy and those temporary alliances which there seems a disposition, even in some civilized communities, to look upon with favour.

II. **AS COMBATTING THE SELFISHNESS OF SINFUL MEN.** Many a naturally self-indulgent and self-seeking man has experienced the benefit of a relationship which has drawn his thoughts away from self, and has led him to interest himself in his wife and children, and for their sake to labour with strenuous diligence, and to submit patiently to inconveniences and privations. Instead of living to gratify himself, and regarding the other sex as offering opportunities for such gratification, such a man has learned to look upon human life as an opportunity for bearing the burdens and cheering the lot of others. And virtuous fidelity becomes a silent but effectual witness against the prevalent and seductive vices of mankind.

III. **AS PROMOTIVE OF THE TRUE WELFARE OF SOCIETY.** The family is the divinely ordered unit of human society. This has been recognized even in pagan nations. But Christianity, in giving to the world a higher ideal of marriage, has rendered a vast service to every Christian state. The increase of the population, the prevalence of industry and of knowledge, the formation of virtuous habits, all contribute to national prosperity; and all are promoted by the sacredness and honour of the marriage-tie.

IV. **AS CONTRIBUTIVE TO THE PROSPERITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.** It is in holy households that the most intelligent and useful and steadfast members of Christian Churches are trained; it is from these that the ranks of the spiritual ministries are recruited; it is these that hand down the uncorrupted truth from generation to generation. The children of prayer and watchfulness rise up to become the strong men in the arsenals and in the armies of the Eternal.

**V. AS EMBLEMATIC OF DIVINE LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS.** Christ himself implanted the germ of that idea of the spiritual and Divine marriage which so developed under the Apostle Paul. He is the true Bridegroom, and his Church is the true bride. But for our appreciation of what is involved in this mystic and hallowed relationship we are dependent upon our acquaintance and experience of matrimony as existing in human society. Thus we learn what depth of meaning lies in the statement, "Christ loved his spouse the Church, and gave himself for it!"—T.

**Vers. 1—11.—*Jesus and nature.*** In recording this incident, the evangelist tells his story with beautiful simplicity, and as if scarcely conscious that it contains what is marvellous and supernatural. It doubtless seemed to him so natural that Jesus should have acted as he did, that he wrote without drawing any especial attention to what in the narrative was evidently miraculous. John had himself seen so many instances of the superhuman authority of his Master, that he could not think of that mighty and gracious Being as acting otherwise than as he did. In this mighty work and sign which has immortalized the Galilean village of Cana, we behold Jesus—

**I. ASSERTING HIS SUPREMACY OVER NATURE.** Most of Christ's miracles were of this character; they exhibit him as governing and controlling with perfect ease the natural forces, whether physical or physiological, which the Creator has associated with the various forms of matter. It would be idle curiosity to speculate upon the methods in which bread was multiplied, and in which water was turned to wine. The poetic rendering of the change may be accepted—

"The conscious water saw its Lord, and blushed."

**II. MAKING USE OF HUMAN AGENCY.** This was according to our Lord's wont. He bade his disciples distribute the bread; he directed the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam; and on this occasion, though he might have dispensed with the assistance of the servants, he chose to make use of their agency, both in filling the water-pots, and in pouring out from them that draughts might be borne to the master and to the guests. It is thus that the Lord Christ chooses to confer blessings upon men; he uses some to provide for the wants of others, both bodily and spiritually; he entrusts to each some ministry of blessing, and each becomes his brother's keeper.

**III. MAKING USE OF EXISTING MATERIALS.** It would, perhaps, have been as easy for Jesus to have filled the empty vessels with wine as to transform the water with which he chose that they should be filled. But this would not have been his way. He did not work marvels for the marvels' sake. He took the material which was to hand, and wrought upon it. It is a good lesson for us to learn; let us take the circumstances in which Providence has placed us, the characters with whom Providence has associated us, and seek and strive to use them for God's glory.

**IV. CHANGING THE INFERIOR INTO THE SUPERIOR.** A thaumaturge might have attempted to change wine into water, a man into a beast. But such a method of proceeding was not possible to Christ, who carries on a process of spiritual evolution in which the lower form is displaced by the higher, and indeed is transformed into it. It is thus that our Divine Lord works in the human heart and in human society. *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.* He has passed his wonder-working hand over many a heart, many an institution and usage of men; and lo! the water of nature is transfigured into the wine of grace.

**V. CALLING UPON NATURE TO YIELD OF HER BEST AND ABUNDANTLY.** The wine which the Divine Guest provided was the best at the table, and of it there was far more than enough. When Jesus exerts his power he exerts it to high purpose; his gifts are gracious and liberal. He dowers his Church with choicest bestowments; so that they who are his own may justly say, "All things are ours." When he gives himself unto his spouse, the Church, he declares, in the fulness of his love and liberality, "All that I have is thine."—T.

**Vers. 1—11.—*The marriage-feast at Cana a pledge of the marriage-supper of the Lamb.*** This first "sign" of our Lord's public ministry may be taken as an emblem and an earnest of a vaster gathering, a more sacred festivity, an eternal fellowship. Observe the elements of heavenly bliss here anticipated upon earth.

I. **DIVINE ESPOUSALS.** Then shall it be proclaimed, "The marriage of the Lamb is come."

II. **CONGENIAL SOCIETY.** The mother and brethren of the Lord, the disciples, the happy pair, the joyous guests, figure the assembly and Church of the Firstborn.

III. **ABUNDANT PROVISION.** As Jesus secured an ample supply for want and for enjoyment, so shall the banqueting-house of the immortals be richly furnished with all spiritual viands for satisfaction and for delight.

IV. **PERPETUAL FESTIVITIES.** The Jews celebrated a wedding by festivities extending over several days; but of the feast of salvation and of life there shall be no end.

"Blessed are they which are bidden to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."—T.

Ver. 3.—"*They have no wine.*" Just as the scarcity of provisions in the wilderness gave Jesus an opportunity to supply the need of a multitude; just as it was permitted that a man should be born blind, "that the works of God should be manifest in him;" so the falling short of the supply of wine at Cana gave an opportunity for the performance by Christ of a beneficent and instructive miracle. And the lesson is one widely impressive and helpful which is thus conveyed concerning human need and Divine grace and supply.

I. **GOD LETS MEN WANT.** It is a paradox, but it is a truth, that it is for our good to suffer need of many kinds. 1. Thus he teaches us how slender are our resources, and how soon exhausted. 2. Thus it is suggested to us to look without, to look above, for the satisfaction of our desires. 3. Thus it is arranged that, when God interposes upon our behalf, we shall welcome and value his intervention.

II. **GOD SUPPLIES MEN'S WANTS AND SATISFIES THEIR DESIRES.** 1. He does this at the right moment, when the pressure is heavy enough, but not too heavy. 2. He does this in the exercise of his own power, that the glory may be his. 3. He does this in a gracious and affectionate manner, displaying his sympathy as well as his authority.

III. **THE PURPOSES SUBSERVED BY THE SUPPLY OF HUMAN NEED BY DIVINE BOUNTY.**

1. All blessings come thus to be regarded as the immediate bestowments of Heaven.
2. And are seen to be the outward revelations of the attributes of the Father's heart.
3. And are the occasion of devout acknowledgment and fervent adoration.—T.

Ver. 4.—"*Mine hour is not yet come.*" God has his own times for all his works. His Son, Christ Jesus, knew no haste; he laboured sometimes to exhaustion; he shrank from no suffering or privation. Yet he was thirty years of age before he began his ministry; and now and again in the course of that ministry he withdrew from the public gaze. When the time came for conflict and death, he was ready for the encounter. But until the time came he was not to be forced into the position which he knew he was to take. Neither the urgency of his mother and his brethren, nor the restlessness of some of his disciples, nor the impulses of the multitude, could move him to take a step for which he was not yet prepared. "Mine hour," said he, "is not yet come." There was—

I. **AN HOUR FOR HIS ADVENT.** This seems to us to have come late in the history of our sinful humanity. But it was in "the fulness of the time" that Jesus came.

II. **A SEASON FOR HIS ENTRANCE UPON THE PUBLIC MINISTRY.** Why this should have been deferred so long, it is impossible for us to say; but there was a sufficient reason. A delay which seems to us protracted is as a moment to the Eternal.

III. **A TIME FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS GLORY BY MIRACLES.** Again and again the Jews, and even his own disciples, impatiently urged the Lord to assert his supernatural power. It was characteristic of him that he commenced his series of "signs" in the quiet domestic scene at Cana. He was not to be hastened in this or in any of his plans.

IV. **AN HOUR FOR HIS GIVING UP OF HIMSELF TO DIE.** We cannot read the words of the text, spoken at the commencement of his public life, without having our thoughts carried, by way of contrast, to the close of that wonderful career, when our Lord exclaimed, "Father, the hour is come!" Until then, none could take from him his life.

V. **A TIME FOR THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD.** Jesus had waited, and, after his ascension, his disciples were enjoined

to wait. The promise of the Father was to be fulfilled in its appointed time; when they should receive power from on high, then was to commence the great work of their life.

**VI. AN HOUR FOR THE SECOND COMING.** "God hath appointed a day." "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." Why should we, like Mary, like the short-sighted disciples, urge and implore the immediate appearance of the Lord? His hour has not yet arrived, or he himself would be here. It is ours reverently to expect, patiently to wait and hope. "He that cometh will come, and will not tarry."—T.

**Ver. 5.**—"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." As his mother knew Jesus the best, so she revered him the most. She had reason for thinking and for speaking as she did regarding her Divine Son. In the words she addressed to the servants at the house where the wedding-feast was celebrated, her estimation of Jesus came forth from her lips unconsciously. We admire her character, and we receive her testimony. The Church takes up this her language, and addresses those who are within the house and those who are without, and, pointing to the Divine Lord, says, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

**I. THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST IS UNIQUE AND ABSOLUTE.** There are limits to the authority of all human leaders, teachers, and masters, however wise and good, and it would be folly to bind ourselves to obey them in all things. But it is wisdom to yield an unhesitating allegiance to our Divine Lord. **1. For his authority is Divine in its nature.** He that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father who sent him. **2. His commands possess the authority of rectitude.** Herein lies the incontrovertible ground of our obedience. Reason and conscience acknowledge and approve the claims of the Lawgiver and the Law. None does wrong who obeys Christ, even though he may thus be led into suffering and danger. **3. To this is added the sacred authority of love.** All that Jesus has done and suffered for us constitutes a claim upon our cheerful loyalty. "If ye love me," is his appeal, "keep my commandments."

**II. THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST IS UNIVERSAL IN ITS RANGE.** **1. It is manifestly binding upon all his people.** They are admonished to "call no man Master;" and, at the same time, they are thus addressed: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." The word "whatsoever" may remind us that occasions may arise when it will be very difficult to obey our Lord's behests; such occasions will test our fidelity and sincerity and constancy; and they will enable us to commend ourselves to him "whose we are and whom we serve." **2. It is truly binding upon all mankind.** He is "Lord of all," because he is Saviour of all. He claims submission and service as his right. He says to all who hear his Word, "Come unto me;" "Learn of me;" "Follow me." Whatsoever, then, he saith unto you, do it! Such obedience will be for your true interest, your eternal peace and happiness.—T.

**Ver. 10.**—"Thou hast kept the good wine until now." True religion and all its benefits are progressive. Instead of looking back to a golden age, the people of God have ever been encouraged to turn the gaze of their hearts towards the future. The counsels of God have been gradually unfolded, and the visions of inspired seers have in measure been realized. There is no sign of exhaustion in the resources of Divine grace, in the provisions of Divine beneficence. Every age of Church history, every period of Christian experience, has heard the amazed and grateful acknowledgment offered to heaven: "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

**I. GOD'S GRACE IS PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED IN THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE OF CHRISTIANS.** The longer Jesus is known, the more are his benefits realized, and the more is he valued. Advancing years, seasons of affliction and adversity, the approach of the end of the pilgrimage, afford growing opportunities of testing the faithfulness of the Father and the friendship of the Christ. The wine of grace mellows and refines with the lapse of time and the enlargement of experience.

**II. GOD'S GRACE IS PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED IN THE SUCCESSIVE EPOCHS OF THE WORLD'S AND THE CHURCH'S HISTORY.** **1. Time has unfolded to the understanding and the heart of humanity the character of Christ.** There certainly never was a time when that character was so studied and so appreciated as now. **2. Time has proved the extent and the variety of Christ's power to bless.** Days of persecution, days of

missionary zeal, days of defence and confirmation of the truth, have succeeded one another; and every epoch seems to reveal to humanity the goodness of the wine in a heightened and more precious degree. 3. *Time has shown what Christianity can do to develop and improve society.* As new forms of social life have come into being, as new social needs emerge, as new difficulties arise in human relationships, these successive events make it evident that what the world wants is supplied in the Son of man. That new conditions of human society are approaching is certain; but it is equally certain that our Divine religion will prove its adaptation in the future as in the past. Under the guidance of Providence, there is in store for our humanity larger, richer, better life; and the Lord Christ shall fill the multiplied and ampler vessels with the choicest vintage of his love.

III. GOD'S GRACE WILL BE PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED IN ETERNITY. The wine is good here and now; Christ saves from sin, strengthens for duty, renews and purifies and blesses. But surely those who are brought to the kingdom above, where the question is not of conflict but of service, not of patience but of praise, shall, upon tasting the spiritual delights of eternity, be constrained to exclaim, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."—T.

Ver. 11.—"*This beginning of his signs.*" All that a man does may be regarded as significant of his character and aims in life. How far more obviously and instructively is this the case with the actions of the Son of God! Yet, though whatever Jesus did may be regarded thus, there are certain works of his which the evangelist notes especially as being *signs*. Of these works, the deed performed at Cana is remarked to be the first in point of time.

I. WHAT THESE SIGNS WERE IN THEMSELVES. 1. They were *works*, and mighty works; such as implied great power on the part of the Worker; such as were not wrought by ordinary men. 2. They were *wonders*, or miracles, fitted to arrest the attention, awaken the inquiry, excite the surprise, of beholders. 3. As in this instance, they were *deeds authoritative over nature*, its elements, processes, and laws.

II. OF WHAT THESE SIGNS WERE SIGNIFICANT. That they did speak to the minds and hearts of those who beheld them, is clear; they compelled the inquiry, "What manner of man is this?" The works led the witnesses to ask concerning the Worker; for they testified of him. 1. Of a *Divine presence and power* among men. The signs were as the cry of a herald, as a trumpet-call summoning the attention of all who were capable of understanding. They spake in plainest language, and their voice and utterance was this: "The King of nature and the Lord of man is here!" 2. Of *Divine compassion and mercy*. Observe the contrast between the mediators of the old covenant and the new. The first sign which Moses wrought was to turn water into blood; the first which Jesus presented to men was to turn water into wine. We see pity in its varying grades excited by human want and misery, manifesting itself in the exercise of authority prompted and guided by love. 3. Of *Divine adaptation* to special needs of men. There was vast variety in the miraculous ministrations of Immanuel. The first sign proves that the same Lord who supplies the most urgent wants is not unmindful of the social pleasures and comforts of men. There is delicate discrimination and thoughtful adaptation and suitability in the marvels which Jesus wrought. Bread for the hungry, healing for the sick; yet also wine for the joyful and the festive.

III. TO WHOM THESE SIGNS APPEALED. 1. Not primarily to unbelievers. Whether there were any such in the happy circle in whose midst and for whose benefit the first of the signs was exhibited, we do not know; probably all were friendly and receptive, and none more than partially enlightened. Jesus did not go into public and perform a wonder to amaze a multitude. 2. But to his disciples. There was no sign from heaven for the unspiritual, but for the believing and affectionate there were proofs given that their confidence and love were not misplaced. "His disciples believed on him," *i.e.* all the more as they saw more of the might of his word and the tenderness of his heart.—T.

Ver. 11.—"*Jesus . . . manifested forth his glory.*" Does it seem to the reader of this simple narrative that this language is somewhat strained—is pitched rather too high? An obscure village, a homely festival, a peasants' party;—are these suggestive of, harmonious with, this great word "glory"? Ah! let us not be deceived by outward

appearances; but rather remember that, as the world judges, there was no glory in Jesus any more than in his surroundings, his associates. Be it ours to form a wiser, juster, truer judgment.

**I. GLORY WAS MANIFESTED IN CHRIST'S COMMAND AND CONTROL OF NATURE.**

**II. GLORY WAS SHOWN FORTH IN THE REVELATION OF CHRIST'S OWN LOVE AND GRACE.** To the purged vision of evangelists and apostles there was a higher glory in the pity of the Redeemer than could have been displayed by any sign from heaven. "They beheld his glory . . . full of grace and truth."

**III. GLORY WAS REFLECTED UPON THE COUNTENANCES AND THE HEARTS OF THE ASSEMBLED COMPANY.** The master of the feast, the bride and the bridegroom, may little have known who and what manner of person they had invited and were entertaining in Jesus of Nazareth. But henceforth!—surely henceforth he must have been to them the Divine Friend and Lord. Whosoever will welcome Jesus to his home and to his heart shall learn the mystery alike of his majesty and of his love.

**IV. GLORY WAS REVEALED TO CHRIST'S OWN DISCIPLES.** These five newly found companions and pupils were soon privileged with intimations of the unique character and power of their Master. It was a lesson memorable and precious as being the first among many. They who learn from Jesus lessons of love and pity, lessons of wisdom and power, learn at the same time a lesson of moral splendour and majesty which shall prepare them for renewed manifestations in a long, an infinite series.

**V. GLORY WAS, THROUGH THIS RECORD, RADIATED TO ALL TIME AND TO THE WHOLE UNIVERSE, REVEALING THE CHARACTER AND THE MINISTRY OF IMMANUEL.—T.**

**Vers. 11.—***"His disciples believed on him."* There is singular simplicity and beauty in this statement, coming where it does at the close of this narrative.

**I. OF WHOM IS THIS BELIEF ASSERTED?** Not, as might perhaps have been expected, of strangers, who witnessed the mighty work and sign, but of five men here named "the disciples" of Jesus.

**II. WHAT WAS THEIR PREPARATION FOR THIS BELIEF?** Undoubtedly their admiration and affection for Jesus, who had sought them or welcomed them, and shown them the friendliness of his heart.

**III. WHAT WAS THE OCCASION OF THIS BELIEF?** It was the "sign" they witnessed, the moral glory which they discerned in the Master's sympathetic and gracious action. Coming to hearts so prepared, the wonder did its work effectually.

**IV. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THIS BELIEF?** 1. The satisfaction, rest, and joy of their own minds. 2. The resolve and ability to publish the Saviour's fame, and bring men to behold his glory.—T.

**Vers. 14—17.—***The vindication of a desecrated temple.* High purposes were subserved by the exercise of the Saviour's authority both at the beginning and at the close of his ministry. If there was in this conduct an evidential meaning for the Jews, there was also a symbolical meaning for all time.

**I. IN WHAT THE HOLINESS OF THE TEMPLE CONSISTED.** 1. The true answer to this inquiry is to be found in the language of the Lord himself. The temple was *his Father's house*. It was the building which was originally erected in a measure upon the model of the tabernacle of the wilderness, the pattern of which had been communicated by Jehovah in some way to Moses, the servant of God. It was by Divine command that a certain special locality and building were set apart and consecrated to the service of him, who nevertheless "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." 2. The holy memories of national history gathered around this sacred edifice. The original tabernacle was associated with Moses and Aaron; the first temple at Jerusalem with the great kings—David who prepared for it, and Solomon who built it; the second temple with the great leaders of the return from the Captivity; and this restored edifice, in its costly magnificence, with the royal Herodian house. 3. The sacrifices which were offered, the priesthoods that ministered, the festivals which were observed, the praises and prayers which were presented, in these consecrated precincts, all added to the sanctity of the place. 4. And it must be remembered that the house of the Father was the house of the children; that our Lord himself designated the temple "*a house of prayer for all nations.*" This may not have been acknowledged or understood



by the Jews themselves. Yet there were intimations throughout their sacred literature in its successive stages that they, as a nation, were elected in order that through them all the nations of the earth might be blessed. The width of the counsels of Divine benevolence is apparent to all who study the psalms and prophecies of the Old Testament Scripture; and our Lord's language connects those counsels with the dedicated house at Jerusalem. 5. To our minds the temple possesses sanctity through its devotion to a symbolical use, for by anticipation it set forth in emblem the holiness of our Lord's body and the purity of the spiritual Church of Christ. The temple at Jerusalem should be destroyed in the crisis of Israel's fate; the sanctuary of the Lord's body should be taken down; and the holy temple, consecrated to the Lord, should grow in stateliness and beauty until all the living stones should be built into it for grace and glory eternal.

II. BY WHAT THE HOLINESS OF THE TEMPLE WAS VIOLATED. There must have been an infamous desecration in order to have awakened such indignation in the breast of Jesus. We can see two respects in which this was so. 1. The building was abused and profaned in being diverted from sacred to secular uses. Where there should have been only sacrifices, there were sales of beasts and birds; where there should have been only offerings, there was money-changing. 2. The sanctity of the temple was violated by the cupidity of the rulers, who, it is well known, made a sinful and scandalous profit for themselves by the transactions which awakened the indignation of Jesus. 3. Nor was this all, injustice and fraud were added to cupidity—the temple became “a den of thieves.”

III. IN WHAT WAY THE HOLINESS OF THE TEMPLE WAS VINDICATED. 1. By the interposition of One of the highest dignity. Christ was “greater than the temple;” he was the Lord of the temple; nay, he was himself the true Temple appointed to supersede the material structure. 2. By the exercise of just and manifested authority. The demeanour and the language of Jesus were such as to preclude resistance, to silence murmuring. The Lord came to his own inheritance, to the house of his Father. 3. By the comparison of the edifice at Jerusalem to his own sacred body. In the language he used in his subsequent conversation with the Jews, he “spoke of the Temple of his body,” and in so doing he attached to the sanctuary a holiness greater than was conferred upon it by all the associations of its use and of its history.—T.

Ver. 11.—*The miracle of Cana.* Notice—

I. THE MIRACLE IN RELATION TO JESUS HIMSELF. The miracle, with its attending circumstances, was: 1. *A manifestation of his glory.* Every act and every word of his manifested the glory of his character, but his miracles were spiritual and natural signs of the Divinity of his Person and the distinguishing feature of his character. His miracles were purely voluntary. Still, he pleased to perform them in order to manifest his glory—the fulness of his Divine and human life. 2. *It was a manifestation of his own glory.* The glory manifested by the greatest and best of men is only derived and borrowed; but Jesus manifested his own glory—that which originally and inherently belonged to him as the “Son of God,” and now as the Son of God in human nature. What glory was specially manifested by this miracle and its attending circumstances? (1) *The thorough sociality of his nature.* His first public appearance was in the house of joy, at a marriage-feast, and that of a young couple in humble circumstances, so that he was not attracted by worldly distinction or self-interest, but by the simple sociality of his nature. He was not an Ascetic or a Stoic, but a perfect Man. His Divine nature did not interfere with his human instincts so as to keep him away from the human family. Thus the human side of his character was very different from and superior to that of the “Baptist.” He lived out of the world; Jesus lived in it. And on this occasion was strikingly manifested the warm sociality of his nature, one of the chief glories of his Divine-human character, and thus representing faithfully the character of God, which is intensely social. Although invisible and infinite, yet he mingles with all the innocent joys and piercing sorrows of his creatures. He is present in the genial sunshine and in the dark cloud. (2) *The absolute independency of his conduct.* His mother innocently interfered. She had long expected a display of his power, and, as she thought, the occasion had come. She says, “They have no wine.” Being touched by the breath of a carnal notion, he gently but firmly rebuked it: “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” In every instance of interference with

his Divine course, such as that of Peter, or that of his enemies, he invariably rebuked it. If anything could vary his course, it would be parental and filial affection; but even this had to give way—it was ignored. His Divine sovereignty shone brilliantly under all human conditions; he acted as God in the nature of man. In this instance he gives a reason for his conduct, which he was not called upon always to do: "Mine hour is not yet come." There is not a great difference between his "hour" and that of his mother; the greatest difference is moral, and it was immediately checked—it vanished before the sovereignty of Divine rectitude and the glory of Divine propriety. It did not affect his mother's love and faith; and if she could speak to those who superstitiously seek her intercession, she would point them to this incident, and say now as then, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." She at once comprehended and began to preach the revealed and absolute independency of his conduct, the sovereignty of his position. (3) His *absolute control over the elements of matter*. The water was made wine. (a) This was done by his mere will. Nothing was said, nothing was done. The elements were pliant to his will. It was done with the greatest ease. (b) It was done openly, before the disciples and the crowd. (c) It was done immediately. There was no break in the festive joy. No disappointment on account of failure; no anxiety on account of delay. What took him months to do in the ordinary course of things, he did now in a moment; and the water, as if competing with other elements in raising a commemorative monument to the presence of its Lord, made haste to obey, and "blushed" its homage. (d) It was done perfectly. The wine was pronounced "good," not extraordinary. God in miracles is not superior to God in nature. God's works, however performed, are Divine and uniform, and all his gifts are good. Man disimproves things,—turns the water into blood. Christ improves everything—the water is made wine. Jesus reverses the human order. The good wine is kept last. This is the Divine order. In all the earthly life of Jesus it was so, and eternity will not alter this order. In the enjoyment of heaven the language of blissful experience will ever be, "Thou hast kept the good wine," etc. (4) The *singular benevolence of his character*. This was a miracle of kindness, as all his were. This was the natural key-note of his life and of his nature. Whenever his power rode forth in majesty, kindness was ever in its chariot, and the ocean of his benevolence was ever tremulous to the least breath of want; there was no need of a storm. Some might think that more wine was extravagance; but Jesus thought and felt differently. He knew how any lack in this direction would hurt the virgin feelings of a newly wedded couple. So that he is tenderly and delicately kind. The quality of the wine is good, and the quantity is kingly—probably from sixty to a hundred gallons. "Too much," says some one. Yes, too much for a peasant, but not for a king. He gave for himself and friends. None shall suffer for being kind to him, but he will repay with Divine interest. There was enough for the guests and enough to spare, as his wedding-gift to the young pair to commence life with. "Fill to the brim." All his vessels are filled to the brim, and the cup of blessings which he sends round his people is not merely brimful, but "runneth over." Just like himself. (5) His *gracious power and readiness to satisfy the natural expectations of faith*. To supply the lack of wine at the feast was not the chief reason of the miracle. This was only secondary. There was a higher reason, and a more spiritual significance. It was performed in answer to the natural expectations of faith. There was another newly wedded couple in the feast of Cana—Jesus and his disciples. They had believed on him without a miracle, but expected one at no distant date. Faith accepted him on trust. At the proper time he fully pays in hard cash, and his power and readiness to satisfy the lawful demands of faith shone forth with Divine brilliancy; and here is the climax of his glory in this miracle. Genuine faith shall never cry to him, "Show me thy glory," in vain.

3. *This was only the beginning of the manifestation of his glory*. The beginning of miracles; hence the beginning of his self-manifestation. (1) *The beginning of the manifestation of his glory was perfect*. There is a special interest connected with the first performances of men of genius, and invariably they are inferior to their maturer efforts. But this first miracle of Jesus is as perfect in execution as his last; he never improved. It is not the first attempt of a pupil, but the first demonstration of a master. The first miracle of the Son of God was as perfect of its kind as his last. (2) *The manifestation of his glory was gradual*. It was so then, and is so still. Faith could not stand the full blaze of his glory; it would dazzle rather than nurse it. We cannot stand the full glare

of the sun, how much less that of its Creator! Christ feeds faith as a nurse feeds the babe, and manifests his glory, not in full blaze, but sometimes in startling flashes, and ever in genial rays, so as to suit the conditions and requirements of faith. (3) *The manifestation of his glory will be ever progressive.* It was so while he was here on earth. He increasingly manifested his glory from Cana to Bethany, and on to the great miracle of the cross with its sequences—the resurrection, etc., which still unveil his glory, scene after scene, to the human family. And ever since he has been progressively manifesting his glory on this and the other side, and will continue to do so, till it will reach a dispensational climax in his second coming, when he will be glorious in his saints, the rich trophies of his redeeming victories. His glory is such in its fulness and variety that time cannot contain it and eternity will not exhaust it. But after ages have passed away, and the heavens flooded with its radiance, then its manifestation will only be beginning.

II. THE MIRACLE IN RELATION TO THE DISCIPLES. “And his disciples believed on him.” This implies: 1. *That they had faith in him already.* Otherwise they could not be called his disciples, much less be his disciples. Faith in Christ is the first condition of Christian discipleship. The disciples’ faith was kindled by the preaching of John, and declared as they met Jesus on the banks of the Jordan. 2. *That their faith wanted confirmation.* It was yet young and tender, still clinging to him like the vine to the tree. It was weak in itself, but strong in its demands, longing in its expectations, and eloquent in its secret prayers for a Divine manifestation and nourishment. 3. *The miracle satisfied the present want of their faith.* Jesus through it manifested his glory, and they believed on him. Faith progresses with the progress of revelation, as revelation progresses with the development of faith. While the guests generally enjoyed the miraculous wine, faith had a higher enjoyment in drinking the wine of Jesus’ manifested glory, and was invigorated and established. The wine of Cana was soon exhausted, but the glory of him who made it still shines, and faith still delights to revel in its light and bask in its sunshine. “And his disciples believed on him.” All believed in the wine, but not in him. The majority remained with the material, and soon forgot him; but the disciples rose to a diviner sphere, and left the stream and dipped their pitchers in the well. Many enjoy the gifts, but forget the great Giver. But faith almost forgets the gifts in the Giver, leaves the rays and flies upwards like an eagle to gaze on the Sun, the Source of light. And this is wise. Have the fountain, and you have the stream. Have Christ, and you have all.

LESSONS. 1. *If married couples wish a happy life, let them commence it by inviting Jesus to their marriage-feast.* Let him be the chief Guest, and he will give the proper tone to it, as well as to the after-life. A good beginning is half the battle. The evil one will be there, whether invited or not; he does not observe the rules of propriety. But Jesus wants to be invited, and if invited he will be there; for he loves even the best earthly illustration of the loving connection between himself and his bride, the Church. 2. *Many invite Jesus to their scenes of sorrow, but not to their scenes of joy.* He shall perform all the drudgeries of life, but not mingle with any of its luxuries. He is invited to the sick and death-bed, but not to the marriage-feast. This is neither kind nor wise. Let us remember that he can enjoy as well as suffer and pity. He can rejoice with those that rejoice, as well as weep with those that weep. And if we invite him to the sunshine of marriage, we have claim on his presence in the gloom of dissolution. 3. *Those who invite him to their marriage-feast will be amply repaid here and hereafter.* He will have his marriage-feast soon—the grandest and happiest marriage that ever occurred in the universe, and the most sumptuous and lasting feast. With regard to those who invited him, he will certainly return the compliment, and invite them; “and blessed are they who are invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.” 4. *There is infinite glory as well as grace in Christ.* Let faith help herself. Faith drew out the miracle, and the miracle drew out faith, and both met in glory. “Draw out now,” says Jesus. It is water. Yes, but draw out, and it will be wine. The quality and quantity of blessings depend on the quality and quantity of faith. Jesus is full. “Draw out now.”—B. T.

Vers. 13—17.—*Genuine zeal.* The conduct of our Lord in the temple reminded the disciples of the words of the psalmist, “The zeal of thine house,” etc. They supplied

a most appropriate text to the symbolic sermon of our Lord. Genuine religious zeal as illustrated by the conduct of our Lord here. Notice it—

I. IN THE CHIEF OBJECT OF ITS CONCERN. It is the glory of God and the purity of his house and worship. Under the influence of this zeal: 1. *Our relationship to God and his relationship to us are specially felt.* It was so in the case of Christ now, and in a special manner he felt and proclaimed God to be his Father. "My Father." Jesus ever felt this relationship; and in the degree in which we are possessed of holy zeal, we shall feel our relationship to God and his to us. 2. *God's relationship to his house is felt.* Jesus calls the temple his Father's house. And so it was. It was his earthly habitation, where his glory should have shone, his Name should be honoured, his worship devotedly observed, and his people abundantly blessed. Holy zeal ever feels God's relationship to his house, and looks at and speaks of it as the house of God, and not of men. 3. *A burning interest in God's house is felt.* Jesus could not look on the temple with indifference; but, feeling God to be his Father, and the temple his Father's house, as a loving and dutiful Son, he felt an absorbing interest in its welfare. His Father's house was his own, and their interests and zeal were identical. This holy zeal does not stop with trifles, but is engaged with the highest and most momentous subjects—the glory and honour of God, and the purity and success of his cause on earth.

II. THIS ZEAL IN CONTACT WITH A GREAT ABUSE. The house of God was made a house of merchandise. 1. *This abuse is quickly seen.* No sooner had Jesus entered the temple than this terrible abuse attracted his notice. How many were there that saw it not! Coldness of the moral nature results in blindness to moral evil. But where this zeal is present, and burning in the breast, then the moral eye is keen and the moral visions are clear, and iniquities and abuses are quickly seen in their magnitude and horror. 2. *This abuse is keenly felt.* No sooner seen than fully realized and felt—felt as repugnant to Jesus as to God himself, and filled him with feelings of disgust and indignation. Where this zeal is predominant, not merely the moral eye is keen to discern social and religious evils, but the moral heart is sensitive of their injuriousness and intolerant of their existence. 3. *This abuse is unmercifully condemned.* Condemned: (1) *As an abuse of the place.* Making God's house a house of merchandise. Merchandise in itself is not condemned. As such it is right and necessary, and was even necessary in connection with the service of the temple, but not in the temple. In the market it is proper; in the house of God it is profanation. (2) *As an abuse of privileges.* People professed to come to the temple to worship Jehovah, but Divine worship is exchanged for human business. In our Father's house we should be about our Father's business. It is a house of merchandise, but merchandise of a spiritual order—not between man and man, but between man and God. It is an exchange, but not that of foreign coins for those of the temple, but an exchange of repentance for forgiveness, faith for Divine justification and peace. (3) *As an insult to God.* An insult to his authority, purity, and honour. What an affront to the Lord of the temple! what an insult to the Divine Father, to be turned out of his own home, and what is most distasteful to him, worldliness, admitted instead! and what a breach of trust, what irreligiousness of feelings and conduct, which are unmercifully condemned by holy zeal!

III. THIS ZEAL EXERCISED IN THE REFORMATION OF ABUSES. As illustrated in the conduct of our Lord, we see that: 1. *It is ever active and aggressive.* It does not remain in mere speech and sentiment, but ever rushes into aggressive action. It can no more remain long in the presence of evil without attacking it, than a hungry lion in the presence of his prey, or a powerful army in the presence of the foe. 2. *It is most sweeping in its demands.* It will not be satisfied with anything short of a complete reform. Our Lord entered the temple and drove out all that sold oxen, etc., and even the innocent doves had to leave. The language of holy zeal with regard to social and religious evils, is, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house," etc. Between good and evil, truth and error, there is an eternal difference, there can be no compromise; an eternal war, there can be no truce; nothing will satisfy it but a complete surrender. 3. *It is intensely earnest.* How intensely earnest was our Lord on this occasion! He made a scourge of small cords, a sign, not merely of authority, but also of terrible earnestness. This instrument was not apparently adapted to attain the end in view, but it was the best he could get, and answered his purpose. He wished to destroy the merchandise, not the merchants. Holy zeal, while not regardless of adaptation, will

ever use the one available means. It will attack the walls of Jericho with ram's horns, go forth against the giant with a shepherd's sling, and clear the temple with a scourge of small cords. The intensely earnest man is never idle for want of suitable weapons. 4. *It is heroically courageous.* It carries its possessor away to attack foes who from a human point of view he can never hope to vanquish. What was Jesus to the mighty opposition he confronted? He had: (1) The opposition of *interested persons*. Those in the trade—the host of dealers in oxen, etc. (2) The opposition of *interested patrons*. The rulers of the people and the governor of the temple. (3) The opposition of *a consenting and benefited public*. The crowd who would be more likely to sympathize with the aristocracy of the place than with the carpenter's Son of Nazareth. But this combined opposition he fearlessly confronted, and commenced his task almost alone. Holy zeal is ever courageous, and makes its possessor, if not beside himself, far beyond and above himself. 5. *This zeal is entirely self-sacrificing.* Liberty, personal safety, and even life is set at nought. It was so with Jesus now. He purified his temple at the risk of his life, and at last he gave himself as a sacrifice, not to the fury of his foes, but to the flames of his burning zeal. "The zeal of thy house," etc. And those under its influence are ever ready to sacrifice even life to their master passion and purpose.

IV. WE HAVE THIS ZEAL GLORIOUSLY TRIUMPHANT. Our Lord drove out the merchants and their merchandise with scarcely any opposition; and did, as one has said, what a powerful army could not do so quickly and completely. How did this zeal triumph, and how must it ever triumph? 1. *By its own inherent strength.* It is powerful in itself, even when it has only comparatively weak men as its instruments; but how much more powerful when swaying great and well-balanced souls, such as Luther, Wickliffe, Paul, and especially our Lord, who is the Son of God as well as Son of man! In such as these, its voice is thunder, its deeds are lightning, its words are two-edged swords, and its chariots and horses are of fire. Its march is majestic, its consciousness of success is supreme, and, should a cloud appear in its firmament, it must soon vanish before its dazzle. It ever goes forth conquering and to conquer, and in its own energy and majesty is terrible. 2. *By the strength and justice of its cause.* Its demands are ever reasonable, and its cause is just. Jesus was right, and these merchants and their patrons were wrong, and, in the presence of holy enthusiasm, they felt it. He had a scourge of small cords, but he had a more terrible scourge than this—he made a scourge of their guilty consciences, and with it whipped them out. They writhed under the lashes; and corruption slunk away before the majesty of burning holiness; and the unrighteous practice gave way before the heat of embodied justice on fire. Right is ever stronger than wrong, good than evil, and truth than error. Let true principles blaze in the lives and actions of their adherents; they must be triumphant. 3. *By its ever-accompanying Divinity.* Jesus was a Divine Person, and his act in the temple was miraculous. True; but is not God ever against evil, and on the side of good? Holy zeal is ever accompanied with Divine authority and power; it is really the natural expression of all virtue, the burning presence of holiness, and the flaming manifestation of God's holy nature, who is a consuming Fire. The act of Christ in the temple was symbolic. God is ever on the side of purity and order, and the feeblest voice raised for them and against evil. God is in that voice, and it must triumph.

LESSONS. 1. *Our Lord was a Reformer.* One of his first acts was to reform the worship of the temple. His followers should be the same; the disciples should follow their Master, and the motto of their lives should be reform. 2. *Before we can be true reformers, we must be inspired with holy and burning zeal.* This is an essential element of a reformer, as the revealer of evil and the inspiring motive of attack. Without it we cannot see as Jesus saw, we cannot act as he acted; but with it we shall be true reformers. Jesus will have true representatives, holiness will have a voice, and iniquity a scourge. 3. *When holy zeal becomes absorbing and universal,* abuses and evils in the Church and the world must retire, and the Church and even the earth will indeed be the house of God and the gate of heaven.—B. T.

Ver. 11.—*The beginning of miracles.* I. THE OCCASION. It is possible, of course, to lay too much stress on the circumstances and nature of the first sign Jesus gave respecting his own character and mission; but it is better to go to the extreme in this direction than to pretend that this beginning has no significance at all. Nothing would have been easier

than to let the wedding-feast pass over without exercise of the special power of Jesus. What necessity could there be for guests having wine rather than water? But if we speak thus, what necessity was there for any of the miracles of Jesus? They helped just one here and there out of the vast mass of needy ones. Jesus looks with a kindly eye on the innocent pleasures of men. His disciples had been disciples of John the Baptist, and John was an ascetic, a Nazarite, a man of the wilderness; and now that these disciples of John had become disciples of Jesus, they cannot learn too soon that their new Teacher proceeds by different methods from those of John. Not that blame of John is thereby implied. John had his own work to do in his own way, and Jesus had his work to do in his way. Jesus will become all things to all men, that he may save some. He cannot truly weep with the weeping unless he can also rejoice with the rejoicing. He takes men as they are, and tries to get hold of them by some timely service. It is a Christian act to increase the innocent pleasures of the world. Where the cup of gladness is not full, Jesus will fill it. The good of this miracle is made manifest as one considers what an effectual protest it is against those who would make religion the necessary enemy of deep-rooted social customs. Here were a bride and bridegroom, to whom the more serious side of life would come soon enough. For the present they desire their wedding-feast to pass off creditably. Is it not likely they would feel somewhat humiliated to think the provisions were running short? and was it not, then, a worthy aim in Jesus to make every one satisfied, and at the same time to give an opportunity for the whole neighbourhood to be impressed by his power?

II. THE MIRACLE ITSELF must be looked at along with the feeding of the multitudes. Jesus does not create wine or create bread. He has visible material before him, and to it he adds what makes it sufficient for the need. But we must believe that he adds what he finds elsewhere in the world. He makes available, in his own way, stores already existing. We toil and wait, and the results of our operations are bread and wine. Jesus, if needful, can bring the same results without any toiling or waiting. His sphere is eternity. We can do nothing without time for a settled order of processes; but whatever Jesus can do at all, he can do at once. Really he was doing in a moment what he does with every vine, with every grape, only he does it by agencies stretching over a longer period.—Y.

Vers. 13—22.—*The honour of the Father's house.* Going to Jerusalem meant going to the temple, so far as Jesus was concerned. Where could he go more fittingly than to what he calls his Father's house? Jesus could not but think how often the Divine glory had been manifested in that temple, how many generations of worshippers had trodden its courts, what countless offerings had been presented, what multitudes of beasts had been slain. All places of religious assembly are a grand testimony to man's need of God. How it must have helped Jesus to direct his ministries, as he observed the people in their professions of approach to their Maker! Consider here—

I. AN INSTANCE OF THE WRATH OF JESUS, AND WHAT CAUSED IT. Jesus pitied men far oftener than he was angry with them; and yet there were times when not to have been angry would have argued an imperfect sense of right. To be downright angry with a man is sometimes the best way of approaching him for his good. The anger of Jesus on this occasion must have done good. Jesus found buyers and sellers turning a religious duty into a trade transaction. The offering to God was forgotten; only the making of a good bargain was remembered. Both the claims of God and the religious needs of men were utterly neglected.

II. AN ABSURD QUESTION AND A PUZZLING ANSWER. When our hearts do not perceive the truth that is laid right before them, then we are very likely to ask absurd questions. The very expelling of the traffickers gave the clearest sign that he who expelled had the right to expel. Still, Jesus can take the greatest absurdities of men as occasions for uttering the profoundest truths. The cleansing of a *defiled* temple is reckoned an insufficient sign, so now he adds that, if the Jews will give him the opportunity, he will rebuild a destroyed temple. No one understood his meaning at the time; it was enough if people remembered his words. The meaning would appear when it was wanted. "He spake of the temple of his body." Compared with that body, the temple at Jerusalem, in all its glory, beauty, and service, was but a poor, profitless structure. We must ever be on the alert to see realities, and not let our eyes be deceived by mere appearances.

III. THE PROMISED SIGN. Note what Christ does not ask for. He does not say, "Defile this temple." It was not in the power of the Jews to defile the temple of the body of Jesus. The temples of our bodies are more or less defiled to begin with; but there was in Jesus a vital power repelling every taint of disease, and a heart that in its purity kept evil far away. Men could destroy what they could not defile. They were able to take away the natural life of Christ, though they could not lead him into the smallest act of sin. Thus we see how the so-called destruction is a small evil compared with defilement. We call it destruction for want of a better word, but it is really glorification and freedom. The building of men, held in such veneration by the Jews, was utterly destroyed before many years had passed away, and no mighty hand was reached down from heaven to put it together again. Its work being done, it was better gone from the sight of men. But these same Jews, not knowing what they were doing, destroyed a temple which God raised again, and raised in a glory and a power which it had not known before. So may it be with the temple of our body. Service will not cease with the glorified body; it will but rise into higher opportunities and higher joys.—Y.

Ver. 25.—*Jesus knowing man.* John gives us, in the course of his Gospel, wonderful evidences and illustrations on this point. When people came to him, he seemed to see right into their hearts and through their present lives into all their past. Instances in Nathanael, Nicodemus, and the woman of Samaria. The power of Jesus in this respect as much supernatural as that by which he raised Lazarus from the dead.

I. IT IS JESUS WHO KNOWS WHAT IS IN MAN. His awful power of knowing the secrets of human hearts is *his* power. Hence we behold the exercise of it without being startled or alarmed. The woman at the well does not seem to have been at all terrified by her discovery of the omniscient, resistless eye of Jesus. We are made to feel that Jesus knows us altogether; but at the same time, we are assured as to the use he will make of his knowledge. He does not come to expose us to our fellow-men. He does not come to protect us from them, although he will do so if it be needful. The injuries of others do not penetrate to the heart, do not burden the conscience, so *Jesus* does not trouble about them. What gives him concern is the evil we work to ourselves. What a scratch is to a deep stab, that the very worst thing another can do is as compared with what we ourselves do. We have cause to rejoice that it is Jesus who has a knowledge so complete, a knowledge so certain to be used for our best advantage. It is Jesus, the professed Saviour Jesus, who loves little children, Jesus who takes pity on hungry multitudes—he of the truest, tenderest heart that ever beat in a human bosom—it is he who knows what is in man.

II. JESUS KNOWS WHAT IS IN MAN. He never needs to act doubtfully and upon speculation. His knowledge is not in appearance, but in reality. It ranges over human nature in all the vast extent of it. He knows the real and the ideal, the actual and the possible; how bad men are, and how good they may become. His real knowledge is to be contrasted with our assumed knowledge. He knows us round and round and through and through. It is not a knowledge of the weakness and follies of men just to make better use of them.

III. JESUS WANTS MAN HIMSELF TO KNOW WHAT IS IN MAN. First, that we may know ourselves, and that for the practical purpose of making the best of our lives. We need great knowledge to make the best of life, with its rich opportunities, its great difficulties, its strict limitations. Jesus wants us to have a living sense of our ignorance and our weakness. He wants us to discover how blind the natural man is when confronted with spiritual things. He wants us to be persuaded how low we can sink, how high we can rise. Then, as far as we know ourselves truly, we shall know others also. They are weak, even as we; and, if we become strong in Christ, we shall hope for the same strength for them.

IV. JESUS WANTS US TO KNOW WHAT IS IN HIM. Wants us to see human nature in its purity and its perfection. Knowing the perfection of Jesus rightly, we shall not despair, but aim to be drawn onward to it ourselves.—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

## CHAPTER III.

This is the first of the eleven discourses recorded by this evangelist, and for the most part addressed to the cultivated, hierarchal party in Jerusalem, who questioned him in an unfriendly spirit. On the sources of these records, and the degree to which John's subjectivity coloured his record of them, see Introduction.

Ver. 1.—But there was a man of the Pharisees. Is this narrative introduced, as Baur thinks, to give a specimen of wrongly directed faith, to which Christ did *not* entrust himself? and was the evangelist busy at once on his great mission of undervaluing the Jewish parties and nation? Certainly not. We have a clear proof that, in the case of the genuine inquirer, Christ did open his very heart; and to a "ruler of Jews," to a "Pharisee," to a "teacher of Israel," he deigned (because he knew what was in the man, and required nobody's help) to unveil the deepest realities of the kingdom of God and of the salvation of man. Baur is not correct in making Nicodemus out to be a specimen of unbelieving Judaism and unsusceptible Pharisaism, seeing that the later notices of this Sanhedrist show that he became a disciple of Jesus, if secretly. Nicodemus was attracted, as others had been, by the "signs" which Jesus had wrought; but he had gone further and deeper than they, and Jesus "knew it." A controversy has arisen on the point—Did our Lord, by these penetrative glances, manifest his Divine nature, assume a Divine prerogative, or exercise a lofty, penetrative human gift? Westcott, on the philological ground of the contrast in meaning between *γινώσκειν* and *εἰδέναι*, urges that the former word, used here, represents knowledge acquired by processes of inquiry and perception, as distinct from the latter, which is reserved for absolute and settled knowledge. Godet, on theological grounds, urges that the phrase refers to the human faculty of observation rather than to the Divine prerogative of heart-searching. There are, however, many other indications of this same thought-mastery, which the evangelists appear to regard as proofs of Divine power; so that I think the real significance of the passage is an ascription to Jesus of Divine power. The supernatural in mind, the superhuman mental processes of Jesus, are part of the proof we have that, though he was Man, he created the irresistible impression that he was more than man. Thus Nathanael and Thomas found these to be the most irresistible proofs of the

supreme Divine perfections of their Master (cf. ch. i. 49; iv. 17; vi. 64; xi. 4, 14; xiii. 11; xxi. 17; and also Rev. ii. 2, 9, 13, etc.). "The man of the Pharisees" furnishes (Godet) a test for determining the authenticity of the narrative. If the lines of the following discourse, which move from the first fundamental conditions of admission into the kingdom of God to the deepest principles of Divine character, and the grounds and consequences of reconciliation with God, are such as meet the standpoint and correct the deductions of the Pharisee, we have, then, all but demonstrative evidence that this conversation did not evolve itself out of the consciousness of the second century. The Pharisaic party was excited by the ministry of John (ch. i. 24), and throughout the early ministry of Jesus in Galilee followed him, with suspicious, malicious suggestions, even plans for his suppression. The name Nicodemus, if Hebrew in etymology from *dam* and *naki*, may have meant "Innocent blood;" if Greek, as is more probable, seeing that the plan of bearing Greek as well as Hebrew names was not uncommon, it would signify "Conqueror of the people." Tradition says that he was baptized by Peter and John, and deposed from his position in the Sanhedrin, but supported by his kinsman, Gamaliel. Each reference to him (ch. vii. 50 and xix. 39) implies a certain timidity, and perhaps unworthy reticence. These are relative terms. Much moral courage must have been required for a ruler of the Jews (a phrase only applicable to a man of high ecclesiastical rank) to have dreamed of doing what he is reported to have done here and elsewhere. The Talmud mentions a Nicodemus ben Gorion, who was also called Bonai, a disciple of Jesus, of great wealth and piety, who survived the destruction of Jerusalem, and therein lost all his fortune (Lightfoot, *in loc.*; Delitzsch, 'Zeitsch. Luth. Theol.,' 1854). The hint that he was an old man in this year (A.U.C. 781, or A.D. 29) renders his survival till A.D. 70 improbable, but not impossible by any means. The identification is not complete. The Talmud does not speak of him as a Sanhedrist, though it gives curious details, which imply that he must have been a priest in the temple, and had the charge of providing the water-supply for the pilgrims (Geikie, i. 584; Winer, 'Real.,' ii. 152).

Ver. 2.—This man came to him<sup>1</sup> by night,

<sup>1</sup> The reading *αὐτὸν*, instead of *τὸν Ἰησοῦν* of T.R., is the best attested, and is adopted by modern editors. It gives additional reason for believing that the previous



and said unto him. To suppose, with many commentators (after Augustine), that the *night* is here symbolic of the mental condition of the man, is far-fetched. Thoma, here intent on his principle of the fabricated character of the Gospel, compares this to King Saul (Paul's ancestor!) going by night to Samuel—a type of Christ! There is more probability that the night of the Last Supper was in the mind of John, and that these two nights, the one at the beginning, the other at the close of the ministry of Jesus—nights of extraordinary significance—were impressed ineffaceably on his memory, and, to some extent, contrasted with each other. Nicodemus did not fear the Lord or his disciples, but his own colleagues, whose excitement had already betrayed their sentiments. Without “believing on his Name,” they had come to some conclusions, and Nicodemus with them. Rabbi, said he, we know. He does not conceal a common sentiment at that moment agitating his own class in society, and he bestows the honorific title of Rabbi, “my Master,” which, as coming from a learned doctor to a humble peasant, was a remarkable testimony to the effect Jesus had indirectly exerted beyond the circle of his immediate hearers: that thou art a Teacher come from God. The phrase, *καὶ Θεός*, precedes “the Teacher come.” Certainly it yields to Jesus great dignity. He is God-sent, like the prophets of old. He has a right to teach. His doctorate is a heavenly diploma; and Nicodemus draws a wiser conclusion than the many did who, in some sense, believed on his Name. They were rushing heedlessly forward to further conclusions. Nicodemus saw a grand authority as a Teacher of men, a Heaven-sent Messenger, in the Lord Jesus, and he came to this conclusion from the settled persuasion that no man can do the signs which thou art performing, if God be not with him. This confession was true, indicating candid and honest inquiry and a teachable mind. It was the very truth which Peter in subsequent times gave to Cornelius as explanation of the healing and beneficent powers of Jesus. Christ knew the whole man, understood at once the honesty of the inquiry, and did entrust himself to Nicodemus. There was more faith in this modest inquiry, in this honest scepticism of his own position, than in the clamours and hosannas of the fickle crowd.

Vers. 3—21.—5. *The revelation of earthly and heavenly things to one who knew that God was with him.*

Vers. 3—12.—(1) *The conditions of admission into the kingdom of God. New birth of the Spirit.*

verses are closely connected with the present chapter.

Ver. 3.—Many explanations have been offered of the link of connection between the suggestion of Nicodemus and the reply of Jesus. Many expansions or additions have been conjectured, such as the following, suggested by Christ's own language elsewhere: “You, by the finger of God, are casting out devils; then the kingdom of God has come nigh unto us. How may we enter upon its further proofs?”—a view which would demand a deeper knowledge of the mind of Christ than we have any reason to suppose diffused at this period. Others (Baumlein) have supposed Nicodemus to have said, “Does the baptism of John suffice for admission into the kingdom?”—a suggestion which would be most strange for a Pharisaic Sanhedrist to have extemporized. At the same time, it may be proved that the rabbis regarded proselytism as a “new birth,” and one produced or brought about by circumcision and baptism (Wünsche, *l.c.*, 506; Geikie, *l.* 505). Others, again, have put further words into the reply of Jesus, such as, “The kingdom of God is not in the miracles which I am working; it is in a state of things which can only be appreciated by a radical spiritual change” (Lücke). Similarly Luthardt. Nicodemus was thinking of the kingdom of God evinced by miraculous signs; and Jesus points him to the inner reality rather than to the outer manifestation. Godet sees the Pharisaic position in the question of Nicodemus, “Art thou the Messiah? is the kingdom of God near, as thy miracles seem to indicate?” He was assuming that, as a Pharisee, he had nothing to do but walk in the light, the dawn of which was revealed to him in the signs of a divinely sent Teacher. All these views embrace a large amount of possible conjectural truth; but they ignore the play upon the words of Nicodemus, which the answer of Jesus involves, showing that a sharp, clean retort followed the speech of the former. “*We know that NO MAN IS ABLE to do these signs which thou art working EXCEPT GOD BE WITH HIM. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, EXCEPT ONE be born anew, HE IS NOT ABLE to see the kingdom of God.*” The form of both protasis and apodosis in each sentence closely corresponds, and this correspondence suggests the fact of an immediate repartee, adopting even the form of the question or assertion of the ruler of the Jews. To the “we know” of Nicodemus, comes the “I say unto thee” of Jesus. To the general sentiment of Nicodemus Christ gives a personal application. In place of speculation concerning his own relation to God and to the kingdom, Christ searches in the heart of his questioner for spiritual susceptibility. Over against the general proposition about God being with the Worker of these signs,

Christ sets the practical truth and Divine possibility of any man seeing the kingdom of God. To the suspicion of Jesus being the Messenger and Minister of God, he opposes the supposition of being born from heaven, or *anew*. From ancient times commentators have been divided as to the meaning of the word *ἄνωθεν*—whether it should be rendered “from above” or “anew,” “again.” The first was favoured by Origen and many others down to Bengel, Lücke, Meyer, Baur, Wordsworth, Lange, based on the local meaning of the word in numerous places; e.g. “from the top” (Matt. xxvii. 51), “from heaven above” (Jas. iii. 15, 17; ch. iii. 31; xix. 11). Moreover, John uses the idea of birth *from God*, or by *his will* supervening on the life of man, and the consequent conference upon it of a new beginning (ch. i. 13; 1 John iii. 9; iv. 7; v. 1, 4, 18). The great point on which our Lord insists is the Divine spiritual origin of the life of which he has so much to say. Several of the English versions, Coverdale’s—and second edition of the Bishops’ Bible—have adopted this rendering, with the Armenian and Gothic Versions. The Revised Version has placed it in the margin. Against it is to be brought the use of the verb *ἀναγεννᾶσθαι* (1 Pet. i. 3, 23, and in Justin, ‘Apol.’ i. 61)—a word which corresponds with this clause, *ἄνωθεν γεννηθῆναι*, and yet could scarcely be translated “to be born from above,” but, “to be born again.” The second rendering, giving a temporal value to *ἄνωθεν*, was adopted by Augustine, Chrysostom (who uses both views), the Vulgate, Luther, Calvin, Tholuck, Godet, Westcott, Moulton, Weiss, and Luthardt, and is sustained by the fact that Nicodemus was led by it to an inquiry about (*δεύτερον γεννηθῆναι*) a second birth. If the expression had had no ambiguity about it, and merely conveyed the idea of a heavenly birth, his mistake would have been greater than it was. There are, moreover, numerous passages confirming the temporal sense of *ἄνωθεν* (Wettstein and Grimm both quote from Josephus, ‘Ant.’ i. 18. 3; and Artemidorus, ‘Oneiroc.’ i. 13); and the *παλιγγενεσία* of Titus iii. 5 points in the same direction. The Jewish rabbi ought to have been familiar with the idea of the “new heart” and “right spirit,” and the marvellous and mighty change wrought in men by the Holy Spirit; but the spiritual idea had been overlaid by rabbinic ritualism, and all the hopeless entanglements of ceremonial purity which had been made to do duty for spiritual conformity with the Divine will. Archdeacon Watkins reminds us that the Syriac Version here gives the rendering “from the beginning,” or “anew,” and lays great stress on this solution of the ambiguity in the Greek word. The statement of Christ

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is very remarkable. A man must be born anew, must undergo a radical change, even to see the kingdom of God (cf. Matt. xviii. 3). The true kingdom is not a Divine government of outward, visible magnificence, sustained by miraculous aid—a physical sovereignty which shall rival and eclipse the majesty of Cæsar. When the kingdom shall come in its genuine power, the carnal eye will not discover its presence. The man born anew will alone be able to appreciate it. The Jews boasted that they were born of God (ch. viii. 41), but could not understand that they needed vital, fundamental, moral renewal—a second birth, a new beginning. Let the opening of Christ’s Galilaean ministry be compared with this bold utterance. There in public discourse he called upon all men everywhere to “repent,” to undergo a radical change of mind, and that because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. *Μετάνοια* portrays the same change as *παλιγγενεσία*; but one term denotes that change as a human experience and effort, the other as a Divine operation. Neither repentance nor regeneration commended itself to the rabbinic mind as a necessity for one who was exalted by privilege and ennobled by obedience. The phrase, “kingdom of God,” is not a mode of representing truth to which this Gospel calls frequent attention. Still our Lord to Pilate (ch. xviii. 36) admits that he is himself the Head of a kingdom which is “not from hence”—not resting on this world as its foundation or source. In Matthew the whole of the mission of Christ among men is repeatedly portrayed as “the kingdom of heaven.” And from the time when the Lord ascended until now, various efforts have been made to realize, to discover, to embody, to emblazon, to crush, to ignore, that kingdom and its King. This great utterance is a key to much of the history of the Church, and an explanation of its numberless mistakes. Moreover, it supplies an invaluable hint of the true nature of the kingdom of God. Thoma insists on the other rendering of *ἄνωθεν*, and compares it with the Philonic doctrine, “that the substance of the *νοῦς* is not attributed to that which is created, but is breathed into the flesh from above (*ἄνωθεν*) by God. . . . Aim, O soul, at the bodiless essence of the spirit-world as thy inheritance.” These ideas, he thinks, John has placed into the lips of Jesus. The two classes of ideas are fundamentally distinct. Philo contrasts the sensuous and the intellectual; Christ is contrasting nature and grace.

Ver. 4.—Nicodemus saith to him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? The numerous endeavours to inter-

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pret the motive or mind of Nicodemus show almost as much misunderstanding of the *naïveté* of his amazement, as Nicodemus did of the deepest significance of this solemn utterance of the Lord. Two things are perfectly clear: (1) Nicodemus saw a grave and amazing difficulty in the idea of a second birth of a man old, like himself, in years, prepossessions, habits of thought, ways of acting, social ties, ancestral and traditional customs, and in venerable ideas consecrated by long usage. He might have known the language of the prophets concerning circumcision of heart (Deut. xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4) and concerning a *new heart* and right spirit (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; Ps. li. 10; lxxxvi. 4); but the full bearing of these prophetic ideas were beyond and different to the almost drastic form of Christ's call for spiritual change and "birth from the beginning." There is no necessity for us to accuse him either of "narrowness" (Meyer) or of imbecility (Reuss, Lücke), or to make such a charge react upon the spirit or temper of the evangelist in delineating him. It is enough that Nicodemus should have seen a grave difficulty; and Thoma here is justified in referring to the language of the apostles, when the narrow entrance into the kingdom was set forth under the image of the camel and the needle's eye; and to Mary, when she cried, "How can this thing be?" Moreover, the same perplexity, after eighteen hundred years of Christian experience, still encumbers this utterance of the Master. (2) Nicodemus did not, by the form of his question, put such query to the Lord in any literal baldness or insolent worldliness. Surely such a view ignores all the tropical methods of speech current in the rabbinical schools. He virtually said, "Birth such as you speak of is as impossible as the second physical birth of an old man, as preposterous as would be re-entrance into the womb of his mother for the purpose of a second birth." Christ had spoken of a fundamental change—one going right down to the very sources and beginnings of life. The Lord had used this difficult image, and propounded his view in a term capable of various interpretation. Nicodemus simply expresses his alarm and ineredulity in terms of the image itself. It is little more than the language of the prophet, "Can an Ethiopian change his skin, or a leopard his spots?" Are you not proposing a natural impossibility? Must not the kingdom of God, which we thought we saw in thy advent and mighty deeds, be on this understanding hopelessly veiled from human vision? The "being old" shows that Nicodemus had gone through the metaphor to the condition of mind of which it was the subject. There was no greater physical difficulty in an old man re-entering his mother's womb than for a boy of twelve to do so; but

being probably, not necessarily, an old man, and belonging to a society of grave, reverend elders, with the inveterate habits, practices, traditions, of long lives behind them, how impracticable and impossible does the notion of so complete a change appear to him! Hence his question. Westcott says admirably, "The great mystery of religion is not the punishment, but the forgiveness of sins; not the natural permanence of character, but spiritual regeneration."

Ver. 5.—Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man (*any one*) have been born (*out*) of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. This memorable utterance has been the occasion of much controversy, arising from the contested sanction thus supposed to be given to the *opus operatum* of baptism, and to the identification of water-baptism with Spirit-baptism. Expositors have asserted that the rite of water-baptism is not merely regarded as the expressive symbol and prophecy of the spiritual change which is declared to be indispensable to admission into the kingdom, but the veritable means by which that baptism of the Spirit is effected. Now, in the first place, we observe that the sentence is a reply to Nicodemus, who had just expressed his blank astonishment at the idea that a fundamental change must pass over a man, in any sense equivalent to a second birth, before he can see the kingdom of God. Our Lord modifies the last clause, and speaks of *entering* into the kingdom of God rather than perceiving or discerning the features of the kingdom. Some have urged that *ιδεῖν* of ver. 3 is equivalent to *εἰσελθεῖν* *eis* of ver. 5. The vision, say they, is only possible to those who partake of the privileges of the kingdom. But the latter phrase does certainly express a further idea—a richer and fuller appreciation of the authority and glory of the King; just as the "birth of water and of the Spirit" conveys deeper and further thought to Nicodemus, than did the previously used expression, *γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν*. The first expression was dark in the extreme; the latter pours light upon it. "Birth of water" points at once to the method so frequently adopted in Jewish ceremonial, by which a complete change of state and right before God was instituted by water. Thus, a man who had not gone through the appropriate and commanded lustrations was unfit to present his offering, to receive the benediction sought by his sacrificial presentment; the priest was not in a fit state to carry the blood of the covenant into the holy place without frequent washings, which indicated the extent and defilement of his birth-stain. Nicodemus for probably thirty years had seen priests and men thus qualifying themselves for solemn functions. So great was the

urgency of these ideas that, as he must have known, the Essenes had formed separate communities, with the view of carrying out to the full consummation the idea of ritual purity. More than this, it is not improbable that proselytes from heathen nations, when brought into covenant relation with the theocratic people, were, at the very time of this conversation, admitted by baptismal rites into this privilege. To the entire confusion of Pharisee and Sadducee, John the Baptist had demanded of every class of the holy people "repentance unto remission of sins," a demand which was accepted on the part of the multitudes by submitting to the rite of baptism. The vastly important question then arises—Did John by this baptism, or by any power he wielded, give to the people repentance or remission of sins? Certainly not, if we may conclude from the repeated judgment pronounced by himself and by the apostles after him. Nothing but the blood and Spirit of Christ could convey either remission or repentance to the souls of men. John preached the baptism of repentance unto remission, but could confer neither. He taught the people to look to One who should come after him. He sharply discriminated the baptism with water from the baptism of the Spirit and fire. This discrimination has been repeatedly referred to already in this Gospel. Thus the Fathers of the Church saw distinctly that there was no regenerating efficacy in the water-baptism of John, and the Council of Trent elevated this position into a canonical dogma. It is most melancholy that they did not also perceive that this judgment of theirs about the baptism of John applied to water-baptism altogether. Christ's disciples baptized (not Christ himself, ch. iv. 2) with water unto repentance and remission; but even up to the day of Pentecost there is no hint of this process being more than stimulus to that repentance which is the gift of God, and to the consequent pardon which was the condition of still further communication of the Holy Spirit. The great baptism which Christ would administer was the baptism of Spirit and fire. The references to the baptism of the early Church are not numerous in the New Testament, but they are given as if for the very purpose of showing that the water-baptism was not a necessary or indispensable condition to the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius and his friends received the sacred bestowment *before* baptism. The language of the Ethiopian eunuch shows that he had received the holy and best gift of Divine illumination and faith *before* baptism. Simon Magnus was baptized with water by Philip, but was in the gall of bitterness and unspirituality. There is no proof at all that the apostles of Christ (with the exception of Paul) were ever baptized with water, unless

it were at the hands of John. Consequently, we cannot believe, with this entire group of facts before us, that our Lord was making any ceremonial rite whatsoever indispensable to entrance into the kingdom. His own reception and forgiveness of the woman that was a sinner, of the paralytic, and of the dying brigand, his breathing over his disciples as symbolic of the great spiritual gift they were afterwards to receive, is the startling and impressive repudiation of the idea that *Christian baptism in his own name*, or, still less, that that ordinance treated as a supernaturally endowed and divinely enriched sacrament, was even so much as referred to in this great utterance. But the entire system of Jewish, proselyte, and Johannine baptisms was in the mind of both Nicodemus and Christ. These were all symbolic of the confession and repentance, which are the universal human conditions of pardon, and, as a ritual, were allowed to his disciples before and after Pentecost, as anticipatory of the great gift of the Holy Spirit. No baptism, no "birth out of water," can give repentance or enforce confession; but the familiar process may indicate the imperative necessity for both, and prove still more a prophecy of the vital, spiritual transformation which, in the following verse, is dissociated from the water altogether. Calvin, while admitting the general necessity for baptism, repudiates the idea that the rite is indispensable to salvation, and maintains that "water" here means nothing different or other than "the Spirit," as descriptive of one of its great methods of operation, just as "Holy Spirit and fire" are elsewhere conjoined.

Ver. 6.—That which hath been born of the flesh, is flesh. *Σάρξ* is not the physical as opposed to the spiritual or immaterial, nor is *σάρξ* necessarily sinful, as we see from ch. i. 14, but as it often appears in John's writing and Paul's, *σάρξ* is the constituent element of humanity as *apart from grace*—humanity (body, intellect, heart, conscience, soul, spirit) viewed on its own side and merits and capacity, without the Divine life, or the Divine supernatural inbreathing. The being born of the flesh is the being born into this world, with all the privations and depravations, evil tendencies and passions of a fallen humanity. Birth into the theocracy, birth into national or ecclesiastical privilege, birth that has no higher quality than flesh, no better germ or graft upon it, simply produces flesh, humanity over again. When the Logos "became flesh," something more than and different from ordinary traduction of humanity took place.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Attention is here called to a profoundly interesting but specious reproduction by Dr.

Destitute of any higher birth than the birth of flesh, man is fleshly, psychical, earthly, *σαρκικός, ψυχικός, χοϊκός* (Rom. vii. 14—25), and, more than that, positively opposed to the will and grace of God, lashed with passions, defiled with debasing ideas, in enmity against God. Hence the birth "from the Spirit" is entirely antithetic to the birth from the flesh. That which hath been born of the Spirit, is spirit. There is a birth which supervenes on the flesh-begotten man, and it is supernaturally wrought by the Spirit of God. As in the first instance, at man's creation, God breathed into man the breath of life, and by that operation man became a living soul; so now the new birth of man is wrought in him by the Spirit, and there is a new life, a new mode of being, a new bias and predominating impulse. "A spiritual mind which is life and peace" has taken the place of the old carnal mind. He is "spiritual," no longer "psychical," or "carnal," but able to discern the things that are freely given to him. The eye of the spirit is opened, unsealed, the *τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος* are revealed to him (1 Cor. ii. 12—16; iii. 1—5). The reference to "birth of water" is not repeated, because the birth from water is relatively unimportant, and of no value apart from the Spirit-change of which it may be a picture, or even a synonym. More than that, the Spirit-birth, the Divine operation, is the efficient cause of that which, under the form of a human experience, is called *μετάνοια*. The human *metanoia*, rather than the new birth, is the great burden of our Lord's public address, as recorded in the synoptic Gospels. In both representations the same fact, the same condition and state of the human consciousness, is referred to. In "repentance," however, and in the moral characters which are the several preliminaries to the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, a change is declared necessary for the constitution and inauguration of the kingdom of heaven. This change is there viewed from the stand-

Jamieson, 'Profound Problems in Theology and Philosophy,' of Edward Irving's hypothesis of the sinfulness of the flesh of Christ. "The Logos was made flesh," *i.e.* "sin" for us, and he was "without sin" only by the sanctifying energy of the Holy Spirit, and his continuous victory over it. There is no position in Christian theology that is not modified or transformed by this hypothesis. If we have to put away sin with our lower powers, with no indwelling Logos to aid us after the manner of Christ, to secure the salvation which he has taught us thus to effectuate, what hope is there for the human race?

point of human experience, and urged in the form of a direct appeal to conscience. In this discourse to Nicodemus, the same change is exhibited on its Divine side, and as one produced by the Spirit of God. In the Sermon on the Mount "meekness," "poverty of spirit," "mourning," "hunger after righteousness," "purity of heart," the spirit of forgiveness and long-suffering, are the moral conditions of those minds and hearts which would become the city of God and the light of the world (Matt. v. 1—12). On this occasion, when addressing the learned rabbi, Christ sums all up in the demand for a birth from the Spirit—a new and spiritual recommencement of life from the Spirit of God. The clause found in the *Vetus Italica* and the Syriac, *quia Deus spiritus est, et de Deo natus est*, is a gloss sustained by no Greek manuscript authority. Thoma here quotes two interesting passages from Philo, i. 533, 599, where the *vous* is spoken of as given to man from above, and where the supremacy of the spiritual over the fleshly is made the only guarantee of admission into the world of spirit. But Philo obviously meant the intellectual rather than the moral element in human nature, and prized the ascetic process rather than the supernatural regeneration.

Ver. 7.—Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. Nicodemus had revealed, by his expressions of countenance or unrecorded words, his surprise. This further explanation deepened the solemnity of the first assertion by a bold antithesis between the birth of flesh producing nothing but flesh, however high its culture, and the birth of spirit from the Spirit himself, the heavenly and Divine Originator of all genuine repentance, and the sole Cause of the new life. Nicodemus was clinging more and more eagerly to the old ideas of national privilege, of sacramental purification, of soundly taught principles and habits. He marvelled at such a representation which took the heart out of all his previous training. The Messianic kingdom for which he had been looking and longing seemed to fade away in the clouds of an utter mysticism, and to vanish out of his power of recognition. Our Lord gently reproved the expression of his surprise, and reminded him of the previous utterance, "I said to thee, Ye," etc. Nicodemus had come in the name of others. Jesus replies, and reasserts the principles for the entire group of persons which Nicodemus might be supposed to represent. We must not fail to notice that, whereas in other parts of the discourse our Lord speaks in the plural first person, yet he discriminates himself from others in this statement. He does not say, "We must," etc., but "Ye must," etc. He

had no consciousness of personal need of regeneration, nor was he in the first case born as flesh from flesh. His flesh was itself the work of the Spirit.

Ver. 8.—The wind bloweth (*the Spirit breathes*, Revised Version, in margin) where it willeth, and thou hearest (his voice) the sound thereof, but thou knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth. Vulgate (followed by Wickliffe and the Rheims Versions) is, *Spiritus ubi vult spirat et vocem ejus audis, sed nescis unde veniat, aut quo vadat: sic est omnis qui natus est ex Spiritu*. Augustine, though acquainted with the other rendering, approves of this; so Origen, Bengel. The great majority of commentators and versions have held that the former of the two translations is correct; that the first time the word *πνεῦμα* is used, it refers to the wind, “the unseen similitude of God the Spirit—his most meet and mightiest sign;” and that, since the same word is used for the two things, Spirit and wind, the Lord, after the parabolic manner which he adopted (in the synoptic Gospels), took advantage of some gusts of roaring wind then audible, to call attention to the mystery and incomprehensibility of its origin or end, and to see a parallel between the unknown ways of the wind and the unknown points of application to the human spirit of the mighty energy of the living God. The passage, Eccles. xi. 5, may have been in his mind (though there “Spirit” is as likely to be the reference as is the motion of the “wind,” and our ignorance of the way of the Spirit is akin to our ignorance of the formation of bones in the womb of her who is with child), and the adoption of the unusual word *πνεῦ* (cf. ch. vi. 18; Rev. vii. 1; Matt. vii. 25; Acts xxvii. 40) is in support of the comparison between “wind” and the “Spirit;” while the *φωνή*, the “voice” or sound of the wind in trees or against any barriers, and the other effects that the rapid motion of the air produces, gives a lively illustration of the method in which the Spirit of God works in human minds, revealing, not itself, but its effects. The parallel is not peculiar to Scripture (see the remarkable passage in Xenophon, ‘Memor.’ iv. 3—14;<sup>1</sup> also ‘Rig Veda,’ x. 168<sup>2</sup>). It is further urged that the following

clause, So is every one that hath been born<sup>1</sup> of the Spirit—meaning, *So doth it happen to every one who is born of the Spirit*—suggests the analogy between *πνεῦμα* in its material sense, and *πνεῦμα* in its customary and deeper sense. Now, on the other hand, it appears to me that this latter clause is compatible with the older translation and application. There *is* a comparison, but it may be between the mysterious working, breathing of the Divine Spirit, whose “voice” or “word” may be heard, whose effects are present to our senses and consciousness, but the beginnings and endings of which are always lost in God,—and the special operations of Divine grace in the *birth* of the Spirit. There are numberless operations of the Spirit referred to in the Old Testament, from the first brooding of the Spirit on the formless abyss, to all the special and mighty effects wrought in creation, all the heightening and quickening of human faculty, all the conference of special strength upon men—their intellectual energies and Divine inspirations. Over and above all these, there is all the supernatural change wrought in souls by the Holy Spirit. Christ calls *this* a “birth of the Spirit,” and declares that, according to all the mysterious comings and departings of the Spirit, leaving only manifold effects, so is the special Divine work which morally and spiritually recreates humanity. *Pneuma* is used three hundred and fifty times in the New Testament, and twenty times in this Gospel for “the Spirit;” and if the usage is reversed here, this is the solitary occasion. The word *θελεῖ* is, moreover, more appropriate to a living Being than to the wind. There is another way which suggests itself by which the word *πνεῦμα* may mean the same in both clauses: *The breath of God bloweth where it listeth, etc., so is every one born of the breath of God*. If this be possible, the form of the expression supplies a co-operating similitude drawn from the unknown origin and mighty effects of the unseen breath of heaven; and on this translation the comparison is drawn between all the ways of the Spirit and the special work of the Spirit in regeneration. An inference is deducible from either interpretation of this verse, incompatible with the theory that “birth from water” is equivalent to “regeneration in baptism.” If the rite of baptism provided the moment and occasion of the spiritual result, we *should* know whence it came and

are heard, but he is not to be seen” (Max Müller, ‘What can India teach us?’ sect. vi. p. 180).

<sup>1</sup> The Sinaitic (N) and other manuscripts read, “and of water;” but this is not accepted by any modern editors.

<sup>1</sup> “And the winds, indeed, are not seen, but the things which they do are manifest, and we perceive their going or coming, but so also indeed the soul of man . . . is not itself perceived.”

<sup>2</sup> “Speaking of the wind, a poet of the ‘Rig Veda,’ x. 168. 3, 4, says, ‘Where was he born? Whence did he spring? the life of the gods, the germ of the world! That God moves about where he listeth, his voices

whither it went. We might not know "how," but we should know "when" and "whence" the spiritual change took place. But this knowledge is distinctly negated by Christ, who herein declares the moment of the spiritual birth to be lost or hidden in God. Physical birth is a deep mystery, both whence the "spirit" comes and whither it goes; the signs of the presence of life are abundant, but there is an infinite difference between the stillborn or dead child and the living one. Similarly, the commencement of the Spirit's creation within our nature is lost in mystery. We discern its presence by its effects, by consciousness of a new life and sense of a new world all around the newly born, but the Spirit-birth, like all the other operations of the Spirit, is hidden in God.

Ver. 9.—Nicodemus answered and said to him, How can these things come to pass? He takes the position now of a learner, and does not by his query repudiate regeneration as absolutely impossible, but he asks the questions "why" and "how." He may reveal his continued ignorance of the subject-matter, but he is willing to be taught. The idea we form of our Lord's reply is regulated by the strict meaning we assign to the question—(rās;) "how?" (cf. Rom. ii. 19, 29, and note on ver. 12).

Ver. 10.—Jesus answered and said to him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and perceivest thou not these things? The term "Israel" is used four times by John (ch. i. 31, 49; xii. 13; and here). In each place the high dignity, calling, and glory of the nation chosen for the loftiest privilege and destiny are involved. Notice the article, "the Israel" of God. The article before *διδάσκαλος* gives a high distinction to Nicodemus. Schlötgen and Lücke suppose some special office to be here referred to, either the president of the Sanhedrin, or the *hakim*, or *chakām*, "the wise man," who sat on his left in the public sessions, or the "father of the house of judgment," who sat on his right; but it may simply mean the teacher of Israel, who has come to me in representative fashion, and who is reminded that he should have been more intimately acquainted with the teaching of his own sacred books (Farrar, 'Life of Christ,' p. 153). Without doubt, the fact of human corruption, and the power of the Spirit of God to renovate, to change utterly down to the very core and heart of human nature, is a great dogma of the Old Testament (cf. Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; 1 Sam. x. 9, where God gave Saul another heart; 1 Sam. xvi. 13, the effect upon David; David's own prayer, Ps. li. 10; and the great promises of God by Ezekiel, xi. 19; xviii. 31; xxxvi. 26; Jer. iv. 4; xxxi. 33). Nicodemus, an illustrious man, a teacher of others,

presumably acquainted with the teaching of the Scriptures, need not have been in such doubt and amazement at the searching words of Jesus.

Ver. 11.—Verily, verily, I say to thee, We speak that which we know, and testify that which we have seen. Lücke and Meyer think that our Lord here merely uses the *pluralis majestaticus*—uses it as St. Paul does, when clearly he was referring to himself alone. It is difficult to believe this in the curious and impressive change of person here adopted, and the return to the first person singular in ver. 12. There was some reason why Jesus, in making this particular saying, uses the plural. (1) Luthardt says, "Christ and the Baptist." (2) Luther and Tholuck, "Christ and the whole prophetic company." (3) Stier, "The Three Persons of the blessed Trinity" (see Chrysostom, etc.). (4) Hengstenberg, Godet, Westcott, Moulton, have in various ways recognized the fact that the company of the disciples already called into the spiritual kingdom, and alive to the mighty power of the Spirit in recreating humanity, were present at this interview. They stood there to affirm the reality of the truth of which their Lord was speaking. Nothing in this sentence is incongruous with the experience and practice of those who had appreciated and were already speaking of the necessity of radical change or spiritual regeneration and of genuine repentance. John in his First Epistle (i. 1-4) uses some of the very phraseology of this solemn verse, *δὲ μαρτυροῦμεν . . . μαρτυροῦμεν*. Our Lord, on this occasion, gave him permission to do so. The knowledge which he spoke of, the vision to which he testified, was in its way and to a degree within the compass of any disciple who had been waked up by the Lord's words to crave an entirely new beginning of his life, a birth of the Spirit. And ye receive not our testimony. This melancholy assertion proves that from the very first (as John said in his "prologue" concerning all the ministry of the Logos, and all the testimony of the prophetic Spirit to the reality of the light) "the darkness receiveth it not." The first demand which the Divine Lord made was rejected, the first "testimony" was disbelieved. From the beginning the dark shadow of death fell on his path. Nicodemus, or those whom he represented, may have had their curiosity excited, but their entire attitude was non-admission of the fundamental principle, viz. the inward illumination and life he came to supply.

Ver. 12.—If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how will ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? Our Lord here drops the plural form of address, and returns to the singular. He is about to refer to

matters in which the testimony of disciples was not available. It has sometimes been said that the "earthly" and "heavenly" things refer to the wind-parable and its interpretation. But, on the supposition that there is a parable or metaphor in ver. 8, which we have seen reason to doubt, there would be no perplexity about the reception of the *earthly* illustration; none could in that day have made a moment's question touching the invisibility and incomprehensibility of the motion of the wind. The birth from water has been supposed by others to be the (*ἐπιγενεῖν*) "earthly" thing of which he had spoken, as contrasted with the heavenly thing, the birth anew from the Spirit. But this also is improbable, for of all the things of which Jesus spoke, that was the least likely to have been rejected by the Pharisaic party. The "earthly things" are the subject-matter of the discourse as a whole, in apprehending which Nicodemus manifested such obtuseness. The change, renovation of human nature, the new beginning "from the Spirit" of each human life, was indeed operated on the ground of an earthly experience, and came fairly within the compass of common appreciation. Though produced by the Spirit, these things were enacted on earth. When Nicodemus asks the question "*how?*" he launches the inquiry into another region. There is wide difference between the question "*what?*" and the question "*how?*" The one in physical science refers to the whole range of phenomena, and the answer states the facts as they present themselves to the senses; the other question inquires into what Bacon called the *latens processus*—into *veræ causæ*, into the movements and method of the creative hand. So the answer to the question "*what?*" may be an "earthly thing," the answer to the question "*how?*" a "heavenly thing." If Christ answer the "*how?*" of his listener, he raises his mind to the "heavenly" and transcendental realities which Nicodemus and we too will have to receive on an authority which entirely outsoars that of daily experience or temporal phenomena. Truly he does proceed to do so, but the difficulty of acceptance is indefinitely augmented. The answer of Christ to the *matters* of personal experience, verifiable by conscience and affirmed by Scripture, was difficult to the master of Israel. The answer of Jesus to the question "*how?*" may prove far more formidable. It involves the revelation of "the Son of man," and the redemption by the cross, and the ascension of the Son of man into heaven, and the love of God to the world, and the gift of eternal life to faith.

Vers. 13—15.—(2) *The truth concerning the Son of man and his sacrifice.*

Ver. 13.—And. The simple copula is here full of significance. Olshausen regards it as "adversative," equivalent to "yet." Meyer, as a simple continuation of the previous statement. The *καί* has more than a mere conjunctive force. Lange puts it thus: "And yet you must be told heavenly things by him who, being the Heavenly One, is himself the first subject of this revelation." No one hath ascended into heaven. The past tense must be honestly considered. The word cannot refer to the future ascension of Jesus the Lord of glory to where he was before—to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (ch. xvii. 5); nor can it refer, as the Socinian interpreters supposed, to a rapture into heaven of the Divine Man between his baptism and temptation (Socini 'Opera,' ii. 511, 610, quoted by J. P. Smith, 'Scripture Testimony to the Messiah,' ii. pp. 103—117), of which we have not the faintest trace either in Scripture or tradition; nor is it sufficient, with Hengstenberg and others, to regard it as a mere Hebraism for high and exalted intercourse with God and heavenly things. True, there have been many who have sought to climb the steep ascent (Gen. xi. 4; Isa. xiv. 13); true also that rabbis spoke of Moses having "ascended into the heavens," by which (says Whitby) they meant "admission to the Divine counsels." The authority on which he depends is the late 'Targum on Cantic. i. 5, 11, 12,' by which, however, all that is clear is that the Targumist was referring to the ascent of Moses to the top of Sinai, *i.e.* above the multitude in the deserts, to the place whither Jehovah came to speak with him. But Exod. xx. 22, the canonical Scripture, makes it clear that it was "from the heavens" that Jehovah spoke with his servant. There are, however, other passages quoted by Schöttgen from Jerusalem Targum on Deut. xxx. 12, and from the 'Mishna,' in which Moses is said to have "ascended into heaven, and heard the voice of God;" but further inquiry leads us to judge that the Hebrew commentators were thinking of the going up to Sinai for his lofty revelations, and their followers have supposed that this process was a synonym of the revelations themselves. Many have thought to rise above the world to the beatific vision, but Jesus says none have done it in the only sense in which they would have been thereby fitted to discourse on the heavenly things. Two things are needed for this in the main—to be in heaven, and come thence charged with its Divine communications. Enoch, Elijah, may have been translated that they should not see death, but they are not so lifted into the abode of God that they might come thence charged with heavenly truth, and able to explain



the "how" of Divine grace. No one hath ascended into heaven except he who has by living there as in his eternal home come down from heaven. Meyer, Lathardt, Westcott, etc., all call attention to other and analogous usage of *ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*, which fastens upon a part of the previous negative, not the whole assertion, and therefore here upon the idea of living in heaven and coming thence (Matt. xii. 4; Luke iv. 26, 27; Gal. i. 7). Man, if he should presume to come with a full revelation of Divine and heavenly things, must come down from a height to which he had previously ascended; but no man has thus and for this purpose ascended, *except he who has descended from heaven*, having been there before his manifestation in the flesh, having been "in God," "with God," "in the bosom of the Father," and having come thence, not losing his essential ego, his Divine personality, even though calling himself the Son of man. For any other to have come down from heaven, it was necessary that he should first have ascended thither; but the Son of man has descended without having ascended. He calls himself "Son of man," and he claims to have come down from heaven without ceasing to be what he was before. Godet urges that, by the "ascended into heaven," he meant such lofty communion with God and immediate knowledge of Divine things as to differentiate him from all others, but that the phrase, "come down from heaven," implies previous existence in his native place, and that the Lord's filial intimacy with God rests on his essential sonship. Still, he conceives that Jesus asserts his own ascension in the spiritual sense to the heart of God, and his descent with consequent resultant knowledge, and expounds both statements by the explanation that as Son of man he is living the twofold life in heaven and on earth at the same time. By using the term, "Son of man," Christ emphasized the exalted dignity that is involved in the extent of his self-humiliation and complete sympathy with us. He was "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven."<sup>1</sup> Who is (not was) in heaven. If this be only an early gloss, it throws light on the two previous clauses. It declares that, though

he came down, and though his introduction to this world was an incarnation, yet that he is in the deepest sense still in heaven. Such language is a vindication of his claim to reveal heavenly things. Augustine says, "Ecce hic erat et in cœlo erat, hic erat in carne, in cœlo erat divinitate, natus de matre, non recedens a Patre." Again, "Si Paulus ambulabat in carne in terra et conversabatur in cœlo, Deus cœli et terræ poterat esse et in cœlo et in terra." Archdeacon Watkins says admirably, "If heaven is a state, a life, in which we are, which is in us, now in part, hereafter in its fulness, then we may understand, and with glad hearts hold to, the vital truth that the Son of man who came down from heaven was ever in heaven."

Vers. 14, 15.—And. Seeing that our Lord had claimed supreme right to speak of heavenly things, he proceeds at once to speak of them *also*. There may be many ways of taking the *καί*: supposing that it indicates a transition from the person of the Lord to his work. From his Divine and endowed humanity thus shown to be competent to explain and reveal heavenly things, he proceeds to his atoning sacrifice. These underlying links of connection are not mutually exclusive. Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must also the Son of man be lifted up. The narrative of Numb. xxi. 8, etc., is one of the most curious in Scripture, and it was a great puzzle to the Jewish commentators, who felt that it was in apparent violation of the second command of the Decalogue. Moreover, in the days of Hezekiah the reverence paid to the serpent led to disastrous consequences and puritanic removal of the idolatrous snare. The Jewish divines consulted by Trypho (see Justin Martyr, 'Dial.,' 94) were unable to explain it. Philo regarded it as a designed contrast to the serpent of the Book of Genesis, but he supposed the antithesis to be that between pleasure and righteousness or prudence ('De Leg. All.,' ii. 1. 80). The Book of Wisdom (xvi. 6), "The murmuring people were troubled for a while for warning, having a symbol of salvation, . . . he that turned to it was saved, not by reason of that which he beheld, but by reason of the Saviour of all." Ferguson, in his 'Tree and Serpent Worship,' regards the narrative as an indication that within the bosom of Israel the worship of the serpent had been introduced and had left its traces. But the narrative itself shows that the serpent healing from the serpent bite was a Jehovistic symbol of Divine love and victory. The 'Test. XII. Patr. Benj.,' 9, refers to it as the type of the cross (cf. Phil. ii. 9; Acts ii. 38). "Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.), Revised Version, Meyer, Tregelles, Godet, retain the additional very difficult clause, on the authority of A, Γ, Δ, and many others, all cursives, Vulgate, Coptic, numerous versions and quotations; but Westcott and Hort reject it, and R.T. states its doubtfulness in margin, seeing N, B, L, 33, etc., omit it. There seems no motive to justify an omission, if it were in the original text; and there can hardly be discovered any reason for the addition, if not there already.

had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." The fiery flying serpent, with its poisonous bite and its deadly malice, was the vivid type of the evil of disobedience to the Divine command, infusing its malign venom into the whole nature of its victim. The serpent of brass was not venomous, though it bore the likeness of the deadly plague. It was not flying, gliding from tent to tent, but captured, still, hoisted triumphantly upon the pole, a sign of its conquest. The serpent in Hebrew and Christian literature throughout was emblematic of *evil*, not as in many Oriental religions, of healing or deliverance (see Gen. iii. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xii. 9; and, properly translated, Job xxvi. 13, Revised Version); and it is possible to see in this type an anticipation of the "lifting up" of Jesus on the cross. There are several interpretations of the *ὑψωθήναι*. Paulus urged that Jesus by it referred to the final glorification of himself; but if so, why was not the word *δοξασθήναι* used? It may mean, with Bleek, Lechler, Godet, the exaltation upon the cross as the stepping-stone to his glory, the way, not only to David's throne, but to the very throne of God—a conception profoundly different from the current Pharisaic notions concerning the Messiah. The word is used in ch. viii. 28 and xii. 32, 34 for the passion of the cross, although Peter (Acts ii. 33) and Paul (Phil. ii. 9) used it for the glorification consequent upon the Passion. Surely the word does, if it is to correspond with Moses' exaltation of the serpent of brass, point to the exaltation of the cross, but to that as to the very throne of his power and glory. Tholuck says, "A word must have been used in Aramaic which admitted both ideas, and the word *ῥῖ* means in Chaldee and Syriac to 'lift-up' and 'crucify.'" Many striking relations thus present themselves. (1) The Lord was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, though without sin. (2) The evil of sin was seen in him conspicuously revealed, but conquered; not only conquered, but transformed into a remedy. The enemy of man, the world itself, was crucified on the cross of Christ. Sin was nailed to the cross when, in the likeness of sinful flesh, the eternal Son of God made flesh submitted to all the shame of the flesh. "The world is crucified unto me," says Paul ("in the cross of Christ"), "and I to the world." Jesus says, "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." The Son of man here on earth, but having always a Divine life in heaven, when revealed in human nature, subject to the laws and destiny of the flesh, "must" be lifted up. This pathway to his glory must pass through the blood and agony of the Passion. There was a needs-be in the Divine counsel, in the purposes of Divine love, in the full measure of the grace which was welling from the

heart of God. (3) The comparison, however, and relation between type and antitype is more conspicuous still in the fifteenth verse, where Jesus added: In order that whosoever believeth might have in him eternal life.<sup>1</sup> Granting that the above is the true text, in our translation an instance occurs of the frequent absolute usage of *πιστεύειν* (*πιστεύειν ἐν αὐτῷ* is not a Johannine phrase, while we do find (ch. v. 39; xvi. 33; xx. 31) that "life," "peace," are "in him"). On this ground, if we retain the *ἐν αὐτῷ*, we translate it as above. The object of faith is not specified; but he who believes, who looks with God-taught longing to the Christ, to the Son of man uplifted to save, sees God at his greatest, his best, and discerns the fullest revelation of the redeeming love. "Believing," corresponds with "looking" in the narrative of Numb. xxi. Whosoever "looked, lived." Such looking was an act of faith in the promise of Jehovah; the otherwise despairing, dying glance of poisoned men was a type of the possibility of a universal salvation for sin-envenomed, devil-bitten, perishing men. Let them believe, and there is life. Let them understand the meaning of the Son of man thus exhausting the curse, and enduring in love the burden and penalty of human transgression, and they have straightway a life that is spiritual, fundamentally and radically new, a life heavenly and eternal. Thus can this vast change of which he had spoken to

<sup>1</sup> I extract here the substance of Westcott's elaborate note on the omissions from this verse. The words, *μὴ ἀπολῆται ἅλλ',* in T.R., "may not perish, but," etc., are omitted by N, B, L, 1, 33, and a few manuscripts, by Old Latin (some), Old Syriac, Memphitic (Æthiopic, Armenian), by Cyril Alex., Cyprian, Luciferus; but found in A and numerous manuscripts and versions, in some Old Latin, Vulgate, Peschito Syriac and Harclean Syriac, quoted by Chrysostom, Theodoret. There is no anti-Nicene evidence of existence, except some Latin texts. The words were adopted by the Antiochene school of the fourth century. The source, viz. ver. 16, explains their presence, and suggests no cause for voluntary omission. So Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and the Revised Version omit the words with confidence. Traggellets retains them. The *ἐν αὐτῷ*, in place of *ἐκ αὐτοῦ*, is also preferred by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, with far less apparent reason, for the latter is found in N, T, Δ, other manuscripts, Old Latin texts, Vulgate, Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, etc. Lachmann reads, *ἐκ αὐτοῦ*. The authorities for the former seem to be B, T, and one or two quotations from Latin Fathers.

Nicodemus supervene. "*How*," asks Nicodemus, "*can this be?*" "*Thus* may it be," answers the Son of man. It is not necessary that all the mystery of the cross should have been perceived by Nicodemus, yet the subsequent references to this man make it highly probable that, when he saw Jesus suspended on the cross, instead of giving way to unbelief and despair, he was stimulated to an act of lofty faith (ch. xix. 39, and note). In this great utterance we have the answer which Paul addressed to the Philippian jailer, and we have the argument of Paul in Rom. i., ii. and we infer that the sources of the Pauline doctrine were to be found in the known teaching of the Lord himself.

Many commentators, beginning with Erasmus, and followed by Neander, Tholuck, Lücke, Westcott, and Moulton, have supposed that our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus ended with ver. 15, and that thenceforward we have the reflections in after-times made by the evangelist, in harmony with the teachings which he had received from the Lord. This is urged on the ground that in ch. i. 18, and at the close of the present chapter (vers. 31—36), when reciting the testimony of the Baptist, it appears to the commentators that John has blended his own reflections with the words of the Baptist, adding them without break to the sentences which he does record (see notes). I am not prepared to admit the analogy; there is nothing in these words, if attributed to the Baptist, incompatible with the purely Old Testament position and transition-standpoint to which he adhered. The argument drawn from the past tenses, *ἠγάπησεν* and *ἔδωκεν*, is not incompatible with the large view of the whole transaction which the Son of God adopted, as though in the fulness of its infinite love it had already been consummated. We are told that there are certain phrases which nowhere else are ascribed to Jesus himself, such as "only begotten Son"—a term which is found in the prologue (ch. i. 14, 18) and First Epist. (iv. 9), *i.e.* in John's own composition. The reply is that John used this great word on the specified occasion because he had heard it on the lips of Jesus; that he would not have dared to use it if he had not had the justification of such use, the like to which he here recounts. The believing *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα*—"on the name of"—does not occur, it is

said, in the recorded words of Jesus, though it is found in the discourse of the evangelist himself in ch. i. 12; ii. 23; and 1 John v. 13. The same criticism applies. John used it because he had heard our Lord thus deign to express himself. Moreover, the commencement of the paragraph, by the use of the particle *γάρ*, shows that no break has occurred, that a richer and fuller and more triumphant reason is to be given for the obtaining of life eternal than that which had already been advanced. He passes from the Son of man (who is in heaven, and came from heaven and God) to the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father. He speaks in more practical and explanatory form of the Object of faith, and the Divine source of the arrangement and its issues. A flood of new thoughts and some terms occur here for the first time; but they are no more startling than other words of Jesus, whose awful weight of meaning and rich originality gave to the evangelist all his power to teach. It is quite unnecessary to find fault with the abruptness of the close of this discourse, or the sudden cessation of the dialogue, or the disappearance of Nicodemus, or of any lack of affectionateness in the style of address. Christ is often abrupt, and in numerous replies which he gave to his interlocutors he prolongs the remarks as though they were addressed to the concealed mind of the speakers rather than to their uttered words. If there had been any hint or indication that these were John's reflections, we can only say that he who by the Holy Spirit penned the prologue was not incapable of these splendid and heart-searching generalizations of love, faith, judgment, and eternal life. But there does not appear to be any sufficient reason for such an hypothesis. Still, it must be admitted that we have not the whole of the former or the latter part of this wondrous discourse. Much has, without any doubt, been omitted. John has seized upon the most salient points and the loftiest thoughts. These stand out like mountain-peaks above the glittering seas, indicating where the inner and hidden connections of their bases lie, but not unveiling them. We do not doubt that John's mind, by long pondering on the thoughts of Jesus and his words of profound significance, had acquired to some extent the method of his speech, and do not

doubt that a certain subjective colouring affects his condensation of the discourses of Jesus. He was not a shorthand reporter, photographically or telephonically reproducing all that passed. He was a beloved disciple, who knew his Lord and lost himself in his Master. He seized with inspired and intuitive accuracy the root-ideas of the Son of man, and reproduced them with the power of the true artist. It is incredible, even if we regard the entire paragraph (vers. 16—21) as the language of our Lord, that we have the whole of the discourse, or conversation, of the memorable night. Still less satisfactory is it to suppose that we have in it nothing more than an imaginary scene, an idealization of the bearing of Christian truth on Jewish prejudice. So vast a thought, though it be the burden of the New Testament, and because it is so, issued from the heart of Jesus.

Vers. 16—21.—(3) *Divine love and judgment.*

Ver. 16.—For God so loved the world. The Divine love to the whole of humanity in its condition of supreme need, i.e. apart from himself and his grace, has been of such a commanding, exhaustless, immeasurable kind, that it was equal to any emergency, and able to secure for the worst and most degraded, for the outcast, the serpent-bitten and the dying, a means of unlimited deliverance and uplifting. The Divine love is the sublime source of the whole proceeding, and it has been lavished on "the world." This world cannot be the limited "world" of the Augustinian, Calvinian interpreters—the world of the elect; it is that "whole world" of which St. John speaks in 1 John ii. 2. "God will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4). Calvin himself says, "Christ brought life, because the heavenly Father loves the human race, and wishes that they should not perish." Pharisaic interpretations of the Old Testament had left the outside world in judgment, to cursing and condign punishment, and had made Abrahamic descent and sacramental privilege the conditions of life and honour and royal freedom. Here the poor world is seen to be the object of such love, that he—the Father-God—gave, "delivered up," we do not know certainly to "what," but we may judge from the context that it was such a deliverance, or such giving up, as is involved in the uplifting of the Son of man upon his cross of humiliation and shame. But the Lord introduces a more wonderful term to denote his own personality. This "Son of man" is

none other than his only begotten Son (cf. notes, ch. i. 14, 18). Just as Abraham had not kept back his only begotten son from God, so God has not withheld his perfect Image, his Well-beloved, his Eternal Logos, the perfect ideal of sonship. He gave him with the following view: that whosoever believeth in him (*eis autόν*) may not perish, but have eternal life. The previous saying is repeated as in a grand refrain for which a deeper reason and fuller explanation have been supplied. Perishing, ruin, the issues of poisonous corruption, might and would, by the force of natural law, work themselves out in the destinies of men. The awful curse was spreading, but it may be arrested. None need be excluded. Looking is living. Believing in this manifestation of Divine love is enough. This is the first, high, main condition. Appropriation of such a Divine gift unriddles the mysteries of the universe, emancipates from the agelong bondage, confers a life which is beyond the conditions or occasions of dissolution. This verse is infinite in its range, and, notwithstanding a certain vagueness and indefiniteness of expression, presents and enshrines the most central truth of Divine revelation. When the terms "gave," "only begotten Son," "believeth," "life," "perishing," "God," "the world," are fully interpreted, then the words of this text gather an ever-augmenting force and fulness of meaning; and they may have been expanded to meet the prejudices of Nicodemus or the difficulties of disciples. The idea of gift and giver and the ends of the giving may have at once suggested to the Pharisaic mind the grand distinction between Israel and the world, and the inquiry may have been made—Is not Messiah, then, about to judge the world, to summon all the nations round to hear their doom? To some such heart-deadening query, to some such conscience-benumbing scepticism, our Lord continued—No; this love to the world on the part of God, this condition of faith on the side of man, thus laid down, is perfectly honest and sincere—

Ver. 17.—For—notwithstanding your vain and selfish interpretation of the older revelation—God sent not his Son to judge (*ἵνα κρίνῃ*), with a view to judge, to discriminate the evil from the good. "Judgment" in this sense may be identical with "absolution," and may also connote "condemnation," but in itself it leaves the issue undecided) the world. Observe that the word "sent" replaces the word "gave" of the previous statement (*ἀποστέλλω*, not *πέμπω*). The word carries with it "the sending on a special mission" (see notes on ch. xx. 21), and arrests attention by denoting the immediate function of the Son of God's mission into the world. He was sent, not to judge

*the world.* This judgment is not the end of his manifestation. This statement is not without difficulty, because we learn from ch. v. 27, 28 and xii. 48 that there is a great function of judgment which will ultimately be discharged by him, and which does, indeed, follow from the contact of all men with his truth and light. This is confirmed by the declarations of our Lord in Matthew (xiii. 24—30, 47), that the judgment would be delayed till the consummation of his work, but would then be most certain (see Matt. xxv.). But judgment is not the end or purpose of his mission. Judgment, discrimination of the moral character of men, is a consequence, but not the prime nor the immediate *purport* of his coming. Numerous passages from the Book of Enoch and the Fourth Book of Esdras, and the literal interpretation of Ps. ii. 9; Mal. iv. 1, etc., may be quoted to show the Jewish prejudices against which our Lord here protested. But God sent his Son that the world through him may be saved. "Saved" is here the analogue and interpretation of the not perishing and the having of eternal life. Christ is "the Saviour of the world" (ch. iv. 42). Hengstenberg says truly, "The Old Testament basis for the words is found in Isa. lii. 10, 'And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.' His coming will, as he goes on to say, exercise a discriminating process and a saving energy. There will occur a further advent, when he will consummate both his judgment and his mercy. "In the Old Testament," says Lange, "the Judge becomes Redeemer by judging; in the New Testament, the Redeemer becomes Judge by his redeeming." Through him the world may be saved from its ruin, by reason of individuals accepting his grace. The saving of humanity as a whole issues from the believing and living of men. God's love of the world and his sending of his Son aim at the saving of the world as their Divine end. Salvation (*σωτηρια*) is the largest of all the famous biblical terms which denote the restoration and blessedness of man. It means all that is elsewhere denoted by "justification," but much more than that. It connotes all that is included in "regeneration" and "sanctification," but more than these terms taken by themselves. It includes all that is involved in "redemption" and "adoption" and the "full assurance," and also the conditions of "appropriation"—the subjective states which are the human antecedents of grace received, such as "faith" and "repentance," with all the "fruits of the Spirit." These Divine blessings originated in the bosom of the Father, where the only begotten Son for evermore abides, and they are all poured forth through the Son upon the world

in the coming of the Christ. He was sent to save.

Ver. 18.—Salvation is the Divine result of believing on him, and salvation lifts the saved man from the necessity of the judgment, of the moral discrimination which awaits every man, and is passed upon every man by his own conscience and by the providence of God. The word *κρίνω* does not necessarily mean "to condemn" (see ver. 17), and whenever the unfavourable issue of judgment is emphatically referred to, then *κατακρίνω* is used (Rom. ii. 1; viii. 3; 1 Cor. xi. 32; Matt. xxvii. 3). Still, this first clause shows that the predominant sense in which it is used throughout the passage is condemnatory. He that believeth on him—*i.e.* whose submits and yields to the truth confessed and conspicuous in the Christ—he who accepts the mission of the Logos, both before and after the Incarnation (see notes on ch. i. 12—14)—is not judged. If there be a judgment, it is one of acquittal. In his case judgment is salvation, salvation is the judgment. Faith, affectionate confidence in the supreme Judge, transforms the judgment into mercy, anticipates the Divine and gracious result. But he that believeth not (subjective negative) has been already judged, and is now so adjudged (here the word seems necessarily to assume a condemnatory character) that he hath not believed on the Name of the only begotten Son of God. Such non-belief reveals insensibility to truth, indifference to the reality of things, unsusceptibility to the light, and a moral perversity which has been persisted in. The approach to such a one of the Eternal Logos did not move him, the unveiling of the Divine face did not awe him into reverence. The sin of his life had blinded his eyes, closed his ears, hardened his heart, and the consequence was that when the Name of the only begotten Son was made known to him, like all previous Divine self-revelations, it exercised no commanding influence upon him, no convincing power, no saving grace. To refuse Christ, to manifest unbelief under such circumstances, proves that the laws of Divine judgment which are always going on have already enacted themselves. *He has been (and is) condemned.* He is "judged already," and the unbelief is the judgment which the self-acting moral laws, or rather which the Logos actively at work in every human being, pronounces upon him. The manner in which any man receives Divine revelation is the judgment passed upon his entire life up to that moment by the unerring and infallible wisdom of the supreme Judge. The final judgment is thus anticipated, but it is not irreversible, and, should repentance and faith supervene by Divine grace on this

stolid indifference and damnable unbelief, the once unbeliever will become the believer, the judgment upon whom is no more a judgment of condemnation, but one of life and peace. Nothing can indicate a more untractable, unspiritual, and carnal state than a refusal to admit so great and imposing a manifestation of the Divine nature as the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

Ver. 19.—The above interpretation is confirmed by the explanatory sentence which follows, and which is obviously meant to explain the nature of the *κρίσις*, the process of the judgment of which he had spoken. This crisis, in the case of the believer, furnishes a clear and illustrious proof that the Son of God had primarily come to save, not to judge; while in the case of the unbeliever it was sufficiently manifested by the absence of faith in that which was so sublimely adapted to induce affectionate reverence and adoring trust. Now this is the judgment. The peculiar form of the sentence, *αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ κρίσις ὅτι*, is found elsewhere in John (1 John i. 5; v. 11, 14). We are here reminded of the words of the prologue (ch. i. 5, 9, see notes), where the original shining of the Light in the *σκοτία* (the abiding state of darkness) ended in non-reception, non-perception of the Light. Subsequently it is said that the light—the archetypal light which illumines, shines upon, every man who comes into the world—came, i.e. in a new and more impressive manner, and by its coming, originated a process of judgment and discrimination among men. This utterance of the prologue is here shown to depend upon the words of the only begotten Son of God made flesh. The critical school make this correspondence with the prologue and with Johannine thought incontestable evidence that we have here John's meditation rather than the word of Jesus. There is, of course, an alternative interpretation. But it appears to us that it is equally rational and critical to see in the words of Jesus thus reported, the origin of the prologue. Light has come into the world, and made evident and established the awful fact that men loved (*αορίστ*, denoting a defined characteristic) the darkness (*σκοτός*, used here and 1 John i. 6 for absolute darkness, the complete contradictory of the light), rather than the light. Lücke has urged that *μᾶλλον* here might mean *magis*, not *potius*, and that the Lord admits a certain amount of love for the light, though less than that for the darkness; but numerous passages of similar construction make it certain that *potius*, not *magis*, is the meaning (cf. ch. xii. 43; Matt. x. 6; Mark xv. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 4). "The light," though so needed, and so lovely in itself, was not loved by men. It

brought consequences from which "men" recoiled and revolted. They loved their own ignorance and peril. They shrank from the demands—from the repentance, the transformation of habit and character, the utter moral revolution that must be consequent upon the reception of the light. Darkness was loved, hailed, accepted, rested in. The process of the judgment was conspicuous in demonstrating this unholy love. If a man love the deformed, the misshapen, the defiled, and the corrupt thing, rather than the truly beautiful, this is a judgment passed upon his entire previous life and on his present character, which is the outcome and upshot of the life. If a man love sensual gratification, its objects and its means, rather than virtue and chastity and serene and sacred purity, this is in itself a terrific *κρίσις*—the announcement of his previous career of dissipation and folly. If a man love the darkness of unrenewed humanity rather than the uncreated light embodied, this is his *κρίμα*, and the process by which it is made evident is the *κρίσις* passing over him. The explanatory clause that follows gives great force to the previous assertion: For their works were evil. Their habitual conduct supplies permanence and energy to their perverse "love," and reveals its historical antecedent—their works (*ἔργα*) were "evil" (*πονηρά*). The love of darkness was the consequence of their wicked ways. The judgment of eternal law has fallen upon their violation of it. The great penalty of sin is sinful desire. A bias towards evil is originated and confirmed by sinful compliance. The blinding of the eye, deafening of the ear (cf. Matt. xiii. 10, and parallels), is the judicial result of their unwillingness to see or walk in the light of the Lord.

Ver. 20.—This verse expounds and supplies a further and causal explanation of the relation of conduct to character. For every one that practiseth bad things (*πράσσειν* and *ποιεῖν* are contrasted, not only here, but in Rom. i. 32; ii. 3; vii. 15, 19, 20. See Trunch's 'Syn. N.T.,' p. 340). The first suggests the repeated acts of a man's conduct, his habits, his practice, and not unfrequently it has a bad sense attributed to it, while the second, *ποιεῖν*, refers to the full expression of an inward life, and is more appropriate to denote the higher deeds and grander principles). This practice of bad ways (*φάυλα*) leads infallibly, by the just judgment of God, to a hatred of that which will reveal and confound the transgressor. Every one, etc., hateth the light (this shows that we cannot err in giving to *μᾶλλον* in ver. 19 the sense of *potius*), and the hardening process which is a judgment of God upon man, ever going on, becomes more conspicuous in this, that he cometh not to the light, in order that his

works may not be convicted; i.e. lest his works should be revealed—shown to him and to others in their true light. The night-time, during which so many evil things, base things, unclean things, are practised, was darkening down over Jerusalem when our Lord was speaking, and would give fateful emphasis to these solemn words. This love of darkness proceeded from a hatred of the revealing power of the light. This rejection of the only begotten Son of God proceeded from a long habit of sin, showing more emphatically than before the need of radical spiritual regeneration—a birth of water and of the Spirit. The rejection of the Christ's claim to cleanse the temple—a fact of which Nicodemus, as Sanhedrist, must have been fully aware—was a striking illustration of his great argument. The “dread of the light is both moral pride and moral effeminacy” (Meyer). (See parallel in Eph. v. 11, 12.)

Ver. 21.—But he that doeth the truth—who is “of the truth,” and “heareth his voice” (ch. xviii. 37), he who is “morally true,” inwardly sincere, who would never shrink from a genuine self-revelation—cometh to the light. This remarkable expression allies itself with many other words of Christ, and suggests that in the heart of Judaism and of mankind generally, amid and notwithstanding the darkness which prevailed, there were found elect souls, taught of the Spirit, longing for more light, yearning to know the truth about themselves, however humiliating it might prove to be. This is confirmed by St. Paul's argument (Rom. i. and ii.), where some Gentiles who have not the Law are admitted to do by nature the things contained in the Law, and even to become a law unto themselves; and where, in contradistinction to the hopelessly rebellious, Paul assumes that there are some who “by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality.” These “do the truth, and have no pleasure in unrighteousness.” They are “taught of God,” they have “seen and heard from the Father” some of the great things of the Law. The Holy Spirit has opened their eyes to see great things in the Law, and they come to the light. They are not afraid of the revelation it will make. They may be humbled and pained by the disclosure, but there is a Divine luxury in such pain. The purpose of the coming to the light on the part of one who doeth the truth, is in order that his works may be made manifest. This is the precise contrary of the conduct of the man whose eye is scaled and whose heart is made fat by sin. Such a one dreads conviction, the outward affirmation or utterance of the inwardly known *reatus*; and therefore shrinks from conviction or any conduct which will promote it. He

flees from the man of God, he disdains the revealing Word, he rejects the blessed Christ, he loves the darkness, this is his condemnation. On the other hand, the sincere man, who is honest with himself, is supremely anxious for the true light to bear down upon his “works.” He is willing that they should be manifested. If he is deceiving himself with false hopes, he yearns that these should disappear before the shining of the true light. If his works will bear examination, then let him know the verdict which is unconsciously being given by the revelation of the light. It is a nice question to determine the meaning of the *ἐτι*. The current interpretation is for, or because, they are wrought in God; i.e. the sincere man desires this self-manifestation, comes to the light because his works have been inwrought by Divine grace. He loves the light, he does the truth because God has wrought within him to will and to do. In other words, the work of grace is in every case the adequate explanation of such a contrast to the common condition of human nature. Godet suggests that *ἐτι* here has the meaning of “that,” and urges that the Greek usage in ch. iv. 35 and other passages will justify the translation, *he cometh . . . manifest, that they are wrought in God*, as though this Divine revelation were the real end of his coming to the light. This appears to me to be incompatible with the fact. The man who doeth the truth may yet need very much instruction before he accepts the Divine Original of his own conduct, or desires the manifestation to others of the Divine Source of his humble search. The more current translation, “because,” is in harmony with the facts of Christian and religious experience, and is in keeping with the biblical assurance, that all good, all holiness, sincerity, and upright striving, just such as Nicodemus was then displaying, is God's own work, and is the result of his grace.

Nicodemus comes, asks questions, receives weighty answers, and retires. We do not know the immediate result of these most wonderful words upon him; but we do find him taking the part of Jesus before the Sanhedrin (ch. vii. 50, 51); and from ch. xix. 39 we learn that, though a secret disciple, he did not disdain to come out of his hiding-place to honour the corpse of the Crucified. The death of Jesus, which had blasted the hopes of the apostles, had fired those of Nicodemus. Every word of this discourse is compatible with the position of the great Prophet at this early period of his ministry, is suited to the Pharisaic mind, and adapted to meet its difficulties and

correct its prejudices. If a few expressions, such as "the only begotten Son," "this is the condemnation, that," "he that doeth the truth," are found in writings which are John's undoubted composition, the circumstance may be explained that he borrowed them from Jesus. This is quite as rational (not to say legitimate and reverential) as to suppose, because of them, that John invented them, and betrayed their origin by placing them in the lips of Jesus.

We do not suppose that John has mechanically recited the whole of the words that were spoken on either side, but preserved those heads of discourse which rise like mountain-peaks above the oceans of thought between them, and are linked together by the glory which they severally reflect from the sublime personality of the Son of man.

Vers. 22—36.—6. *The meanlike song of the Baptist.*

Vers. 22—26.—(1) *The ministry and baptism of Jesus in Judæa.*

Ver. 22.—With this verse a new departure is taken, and circumstances are described which indirectly, rather than explicitly, indicate the manner of our Lord's ministry for the larger part of a year; and they furnish opportunity for recording the last great public utterance of John the Baptist, with all its special difficulties of chronology and doctrine. After these things, related in the previous paragraphs; after, that is, the scene in the temple, and the demand for a sign, and the typical discourse of the Lord with a ruler of the Jews, from reasons not difficult to deduce from the narrative, Jesus (*came*) and his disciples [*came*] into the land (*γῆν*, not *χώραν*, as in Mark i. 5) of Judæa. Surrounded or accompanied by some of his disciples (John being one of them), Jesus left the metropolis and betook himself to the country-side. His Messianic claims were not accepted by the authorities. He did not entrust himself to the half-believers. He altered or deviated from the course hitherto adopted, and addressed himself to the less-prejudiced inhabitants of the country places in the province of Judæa. His hour was not yet come. Jerusalem and Judah were thus compared or contrasted in Ezra ii. 1; vii. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 18. The precise locality is not stated, though it is probable it was not far from the new scene chosen by John for the continuance of his ministry. The identification of the site of *Enon*, near *Saleim*, does not finally determine the scene of our Lord's abode or baptismal ministry.

We are expressly told, both here and in ch. iv. 3, that it was in Judæa, not Samaria, that Jesus there tarried with them, and was baptizing. The words imply a lengthened abode, and a method of ministry which, from that time, he laid aside. The statement that he administered the rite personally is in ch. iv. 2 explicitly corrected. The baptism by the disciples was done, however, with the sanction and under the direction of Jesus. As the trial ministry of the twelve apostles (mentioned in Matt. x.), occurring during our Lord's earthly life, corresponded with the first preaching of John rather than with that which followed the glorification of Jesus and the Pentecostal effusion, so this ordinance closely resembled the water-baptism of John; it was a preparatory symbol, an educational rite, one that allied this early ministry to that of his great forerunner. The water-baptism of Jesus corresponded in significance with the water-baptism of John. They were one and the same ordinance, predictive, symbolic, anticipatory of the baptism of the Spirit. "Jesus adopted John's baptism ere its waters for ever ceased to flow, and thus he blessed and consecrated them. He took up the work of his forerunner and completed it" (Eldersheim, i. 393). Weiss (with consent of Renan) admits that these reminiscences reveal their own historicity, and none more so than the return of Jesus for a time to the scenes of the activity of the Baptist. Apparently such an act conflicts with the exalted ideas the author of the Fourth Gospel entertains with reference to his Master. Thoma thinks he sees in Pauline writings indication of Christ's baptismal ministry, and suggests that the "Johannist" therefore finds a place for such "a washing in water by the Word" in the active word of Jesus! When our Lord, after his resurrection, referred to the baptism with the Spirit, he contrasted it with the baptism of John, and made no reference to his own temporary adoption of the same rite. All water-baptism is thus placed in its true relation to the baptism of the Spirit—not as the necessary preliminary of the latter, nor its indispensable seal or guarantee, but as the impressive symbol of the need of heavenly cleansing, and of the direct impact upon the soul of the power of the eternal Spirit. The length of our Lord's residence in Judæa cannot be positively determined; but one hint may be gathered from ch. iv. 35. The "four months before the harvest" indicate the arrival of the month of December, and therefore the lapse of some eight months between the cleansing of the temple and the return to Galilee. This last event, in Matthew's Gospel (iv. 12—17 with parallels), is associated with the imprisonment of John. The Fourth Gospel, by obvious reference to



the current synoptic chronology of the commencement of the Galilaean ministry (one which made this imprisonment a note of time), shows that the period described in this Gospel, and the baptismal energy of Jesus in Judæa, and the profoundly interesting events mentioned in ch. iii. and iv., were not incompatible with admitted facts. It also suggests that the character of our Lord's ministry in the neighbourhood of the metropolis was closely allied with that which the synoptists described as obtaining in his early Galilaean efforts. We are impressed by the solemn silence which has fallen over these eight months. It may be accounted for on the general principle of the evangelist, which was to fasten upon and preserve the memory of a few solemn moments which especially impressed his own mind, and which had been overlooked or unknown by Matthew and the other evangelists. Moreover, it is more than probable that the author of this Gospel was not with the Master during the whole of this period. There are, however, hints that the rumours of the spiritual might and gathering power of Jesus had produced a great effect upon John the Baptist, and qualified the tone of his last testimony.

Ver. 23.—And John also was baptizing in *Enon*, near to *Salim*, because there were many waters there; and they came, and were baptized. There is much difficulty in determining the site of *Enon*, near *Salim*. Eusebius and Jerome (in 'Onomasticon') place it in the northern part of Samaria, about eight miles south of Scythopolis (Jerome, 'Ad Evagrium,' Ep. 126; Epiph., 'Hær.' lv. 2; Winer, 'Real Wört.' i. 33; Lücke, *in loc.*; Thomson, 'The Land and the Book,' ii. 176). This does not well accord with the statement that Jesus was "in Judæa," and proposed to "pass through Samaria" (cf. ver. 22; ch. iv. 1—4). It may be observed, however, that our narrative does not limit the scene of our Lord's Judæan ministry to any one place, nor does it assert that the Baptist and Jesus were in near proximity, but rather the reverse. There is a *Shilhim* mentioned in Josh. xv. 32, with which is associated an *ain* (or fountain)—a word closely resembling "*Enon*." This would seem to have been in the south of Judæa. Godet thinks that, since *Ain* and *Remmon* are associated with each other in Josh. xix. 7 and 1 Chron. iv. 32, and an *En-Remmon* is spoken of in Neh. xi. 29, that we have in this blending the origin of the word "*Enon*." He thinks that the presence of waters is more likely to be specified in a dry region like that of the border of Edom than in a fertile district like Samaria; and he goes on to argue that Jesus may therefore have travelled south between Hebron and

Beersheba, even as, in the synoptics, we find him in Cæsarea Philippi, the northernmost portion of the Holy Land. Certainly he may have tarried there during the eight months, but we have no right to establish it from this passage. It is not said that Jesus was at *Enon*. Dr. Barclay (1858) reports the discovery of *Enon* at *Wady Fâr'ah*, a secluded valley five miles north-east of Jerusalem (Grove, Smith's 'Dict. Bible'). The recent discoveries of the Palestine Exploration Society find this *Enon* (*Aynun*) and *Salim* not far from the *Askar*, or *Sychar*, where Jesus rested when John's ministry had been suddenly arrested. (Edersheim thinks that this *Enon* and *Salim* in *Wady Fâr'ah* leading from Samaria to the Jordan, are too far apart; but see 'Pal. Exp. Fund Report,' 1874, p. 141; 'Pict. Palestine,' ii. 237; 'Tent-Work in Palestine,' i. 91—93.) Allegory reaches the point of absurdity when we are told by Thoma that neither place nor time are historic. The *Salim* is (says he), according to Ps. lxxvi. 2, the tabernacle or place of God, and therefore, according to Philo, indicates the Logos, who thenceforth becomes the Illuminator and Ruler. "The multitude of waters" would be suitable, necessary, to any great gatherings such as those which had followed the Baptist to the banks of the Jordan, as well as for baptismal processes. Such a site for *Enon* is far more probable, on historical grounds, than is the southern extremity of Judæa; for Herod would have had no jurisdiction there, and would not have been tempted to arrest John's ministrations, nor would he or Herodias have suffered from the Baptist's rebuke of their adultery, if such reproaches had been spoken so far away from the centre of his tetrarchy. If, however, John had made no secret of his disapproval in regions so near to Galilee and Peræa, over which he presided, the consequent irritation of the voluptuous prince may have been more easily aroused, and his vengeance more legitimately taken. But how came John to be still administering baptism with a group of disciples of his own, and doing this long after the amazing announcements he had made in the spring of the year with reference to the rank and functions of the Lord Jesus? This narrative is the true key to the otherwise inexplicable contrariety between the Johannine testimonies to Christ and the message from the prison as described by the synoptists. It is the solution of the mystery that one who hailed Jesus as the Son of God and the Lamb of God and Baptizer with the Holy Spirit, and who was declared by Christ himself to be the greatest of woman born, was, notwithstanding, "less than the least in the kingdom of heaven." John is here shown by the fourth evangelist

to have been still taking an independent position. He pointed others to Jesus, but he did not enroll himself among his followers. John was at last "offended" more than he knew at the humility of Jesus. He still waited for the coming of the Conqueror and the Wielder of the axe; he was looking for the manifested King, for the hour which had not yet come. He is a remarkable specimen of the energy with which a great purpose is embraced by those who are pledged to make it accomplish its end. The preparatory work of John could not, any more than the Hebraism of which it was the highest type, come to an abrupt end voluntarily; hence he continued it even to the peril of sacrificing all its value. *They came, and were baptized*; as "they" had done at Bethabara. There was some splitting up of the Messianic movement (Keim), and we see the effect of it upon his disciples and himself. Even in the midst of the labours of Paul (Acts xix. 1—4), we find that Johanne baptism was still practised, and traces of the custom may still be observed in Oriental sects even to the present day.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 24.—For John had not yet been cast into the prison. This clause shows that the evangelist was alive to the apparent discrepancy which his account of a Judæan ministry might otherwise have suggested with the synoptic chronological *initium* of the Galilæan ministry. The remark shows that all that happened preceded that ministry, and equates the journey through Samaria with that mentioned in Matt. iv. 12. Even Hilgenfeld says, "*Involuntarily* the fourth evangelist here testifies to his acquaintance with the synoptical narrative." In our opinion it was designed and spontaneous. The first journey to Galilee, mentioned in ch. i. 43, was not the commencement of a public prophetic ministry, and the synoptists are silent about it. The ἀνεχώρησεν, he "*withdrew*," shows that there was some reason for his abrupt departure, over and above what was stated. John gives the reason for the departure by ch. iv. 1, 2, where the conduct of the Pharisees was becoming more watchful and jealous. The authority which John here assumes to correct and enlarge apostolic tradition, reveals the claim of one who professed unique knowledge of inextinguishable facts.

Ver. 25.—There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew<sup>2</sup> about purifying. Such proximity of

two such leaders, teaching and proclaiming the kingdom of heaven, and baptizing into a glorious hope, a Divine future, and a spiritual change, was certain to excite controversy. The word (ἑρπης) "questioning" is used in Acts xv. 2 for the dispute at Antioch, and Paul uses the same phrase for dangerous, useless, and angry debate (1 Tim. vi. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 23; Titus iii. 9). It was, perhaps, not the first, and certainly it was not the last, of the controversies which raged over the symbolic purification of the Church. John's disciples appear to have taken up arms against some particular Jew, who was prepared either to question the right of Jesus to baptize, or the essential value of this ordinance. This "Jew" was apparently maintaining a greater potency for the baptism of Jesus than John could claim for his, and was basing his view upon the testimony which John had already borne to Jesus. *Purifying* was the great theme of Essenic and Pharisaic profession. It was without doubt one of the great symbolic purposes of the Levitical legislation. The purification of the flesh was, however, in Christ's teaching, a very small part of the claim for purity. Nothing less than a spiritual and radical moral change availed, and our Lord insisted on this to the disparagement of the mere ceremonial. This was the first recorded discussion on the nature and value of baptismal purifying. Would that it had been the last! The question arose among those who had been baptized by John, whether another had any right to administer such an ordinance? Could another receive the confession of sins? Was the baptism of John to terminate now that he had come of whom John himself had said, "This is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit"?

Ver. 26.—They (the disciples of John) came to John, and said to him, Rabbi—the title of deep respect (ver. 2), which stood in Jewish reverence high above all civil and military rank, and was here yielded in courtesy to the heroic leader—he who was with thee, apparently in entire mutual understanding with thee, receiving baptism at thy hands, and thus admitting thy right to baptize the people of God—"with thee" as we are "with thee"—beyond Jordan—at Bethany (Bethabara), at a better baptizing—place than this, on a grand historic site, the very scene of the great administration, where the Sanhedrin deferred to thy claims and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. author's article, "Sabæans," in *Dict. Christ. Biog.*, vol. iv.

<sup>2</sup> T.R., with Griesbach, etc., read Ἰουδαίων, with N\*, G, A, and numerous manuscripts; but Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Westcott and Hort, Revised Version, Ἰουδαίου, JOHN.

with N\*, A, B, L, Γ, etc., and a number of versions and Fathers, and it gives definiteness to the narrative. Godet disputes the change, and thinks the reading may easily have been occasioned by the similarity of the termination of Ἰουδαίου and of καθαρισμοῦ.

the multitudes attested the hold thou hadst on their affections—to whom thou hast borne testimonies—the man who received thy homage, but who admitted also thy claims, about whom thou didst utter such strong things of unspeakable import—behold, he is now thy rival in popular esteem; this man is baptizing, and—with a pardonable exaggeration, they add—all men are coming unto him. He is eclipsing thee; he seems to usurp the high and unique position which had been assumed by thyself. Serious questions these, which must lead to a complete disruption among the disciples of John. Before examining the reply of John to the query, it is well to observe that John had been walking in the blinding and bewildering light of new ideas; that the Fourth Gospel brings us into contact with John at the moment where the synoptic narrative draws its portraiture to a conclusion; and yet the Fourth Gospel, quite as firmly as the synoptists, shows that the fresh light which had dawned on John had not induced him to forego the preparatory mission on which his heart was set, and the zeal of which had consumed him. If the perplexity arises—How could John have borne such ample testimony to Jesus and not at once have followed in his train? we reply that the language of John in Matt. iii. 14 is just as difficult to reconcile with the message from the prison. Thoma admits that this fact corresponds with the question, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?” In like manner, Hebraism itself within the bosom of the Church maintained a place after all its purpose had been fulfilled. The destruction of the temple and of the Jewish state was necessary to abolish the force of the Hebrew tendency to ritualism of place and symbol even in the heart of Christ’s disciples. Many of the mighty powers of the world, if they had not possessed an energy and vitality which refused to succumb when their work was really done, would never have done that work at all.

Ver. 27—32.—(2) *The earthly and heavenly commission.*

Ver. 27.—John answered and said, A man can receive nothing—neither office, function, faculty, nor life-work, in the kingdom of God—except it has been given him from heaven. The saying is broad, general, comprehensive, sustaining. It is not the glorification of success, but an explanation of the ground of high service. All good service, all high faculty, all holy mission, all sacred duty, are assigned to us by Heaven. “No man taketh this honour unto himself, unless he be called of God.” Commentators have ranged themselves into three groups as to the primary application of the words.

(1) Those who have limited the mental reference to John himself. “My function is, as I am about to explain, a subordinate one,” “I have received that and nothing else from heaven.” “I cannot make myself into the Bridegroom of the Church, or the Light of the world, or the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost.” “I have received that only which is given and assigned to me by God.” (So Bengel, Calvin, Hengstenberg, and at one time Godet.) (2) Those who regard it as being a distinct reference to Christ, and as a vindication of Jesus from the complaint of John’s own disciples. The high activity and present position of Jesus is declared by John to have been conferred on Christ “from heaven.” He would not, could not, have taken it upon himself apart from the Divine order. (So Godet, Meyer, Watkins, Thoma.) (3) Those who refer it to both “John and Jesus;” i.e. accept it as the general principle, applicable with equal force to them both. Intense man that he was, John felt justified in referring the entire function and mission of both the Christ and his forerunner to the will, predestination, and bestowment of Heaven. (So Wettstein, Lange, Luthardt, Lücke, Westcott, Geikie, Moulton.) This is surely the most obvious and rational interpretation. Perhaps “heaven” is not exactly identical with “God,” but may point to the whole of the providential circumstances, to the Divine resources, to the inheritance of effects from more remote antecedents in the Divine will; but it is difficult to press this distinction in all cases.

Ver. 28.—Ye yourselves (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 9 for similar emphatic pronoun) bear me witness—you will do it readily, if I challenge you, for my testimonies were frequent and varied (in fact, the synoptists and the fourth evangelist are equally explicit here)—that I said, I am not the Messiah (ch. i. 20; Matt. iii. 11, 12; Luke iii. 15—17). This announcement, made with great publicity at Bethany, was the basis of the present remonstrance; and the words which follow strongly sustain John’s reference to the Divine predestination in his own case and that of Jesus (ἀλλ’ ὅτι may point back to the discourse of John, or may simply indicate transition to the second statement). But that I am one sent (on a special mission) before him. He boldly implies, “This is more than I have already testified concerning ‘the Christ;’ and my place is not at his side, not following in his train. I am ‘a voice;’ my work is continuously to break up a way for him. I am here still, making the mountains low, and filling up the valleys for the approach of the great King.” A man can receive nothing in the shape of life-work except that which is assigned to him out of heaven.

**Ver. 29.**—And now the Baptist bethinks him of another remarkable image, with which, as a student of the Old Testament, and being himself "more than a prophet," he was familiar. The tenderness of the imagery had not hitherto, however, comported with the ministry of the *vox clamantis*. Whereas the New Testament represents the loving-kindness and righteousness of the Lord God under the metaphor of a *Father's* love to his prodigal but repenting children, the prophets were often disposed to set forth the same idea in the light of a *Husband* yearning over his bride, even betrothing her a second time unto himself after her faithlessness and folly. Jehovah and Jehovah's King and Representative are set forth as the Bridegroom of the true Israel (Ps. xlv.; Isa. liv. 5; Hos. ii. 19, 20; the Song of Songs; Ezek. xvi.; Mal. ii. 11, etc.); and the New Testament writers, especially John himself, who delights in the image (Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2, 9; xxii. 17), and Paul, who compares the relation of the Saviour to his Church under this endearing imagery (Eph. v. 32; 2 Cor. xi. 2), vindicate the legitimacy of the metaphor. The Baptist might easily think of this language, but it is more than possible that he had been profoundly touched by the news that had reached him concerning the presence of Jesus at a marriage-feast. John had been a Nazarite from his birth. Jesus was revealing himself amid the pleasures and innocent joys of life and love. John's conception of the kingdom had been that of severance from the world—seclusion, ascetic restraint. Jesus had manifested his glory amid the festival and in the common life and daily ways of men. John may have seen that there was much in this to captivate the heart of the true Israel; and he glances at the bridal of heaven and earth in this new conception of the mission of the Messiah. It may have staggered him, as he had taught Israel to hope for One whose hand would be more heavy upon them and on their sins than his had been. Where was the axe laid at the root of the trees? where the fire that scorches to cleanse and purify? But he accepted to some extent the new revelation, and found his own place in the novel reconstruction of the kingdom. So he says, **He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.** However, John throws in a novel thought, explanatory of his own position, and not found in the Old Testament imagery: "I am not the Bridegroom," says he; "but it is also true that I am not the Bride. Such is my position that I am standing outside the company of those who are the prophetic 'Bride.'" The friend of the bridegroom (φίλος τοῦ νυμφίου, παρ-νύμφιος, answering to the אֲדָמָה and אֲדָמָה of the Aramaic writers) is he who acts the part

of intermediary—the confidant of both. He presides at the ceremonies of the betrothal and at the wedding-feast, and especially in the intersts of the bridegroom. The image was probably suggested to him by the great discovery made by the friend of the Cana bridegroom touching the "glory" of the mysterious Guest on that typical occasion. "The friend of the bridegroom" differs profoundly from the Bridegroom. The Christ will prove ready to occupy this position, and John has declared that he is not the Christ. Moreover, John differs from the Bride; he does not receive the lavish love, nor the deep intimacies of that affection, nor the dowry of sacrificial devotion with which that love will at length be won. This *paranymphios* standeth and heareth him. It is not said, "seeth him." Some have argued that John here calls attention to the fact that all that the Bridegroom has been saying has reached him by means of the information brought to him on the part of those who were both his own disciples and the disciples of Jesus; but the next clause is inconsistent with this. The friend of the bridegroom stands ready to do the will and promote the honour and pleasure of his friend. (The materialistic and sensualistic manner in which some have pressed the force of the imagery is out of place.) "The voice of the bridegroom," the hilarious joy of the bridegroom, is a proverbial expression (Jer. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10). There is a contrast felt between the formal business-like fellowship that prevailed between the bride and the friend of the bridegroom, and the free outspoken love of the bridegroom himself. The lip-ings of prophecy are contrasted with the outspoken utterances of the gospel of love. And he rejoiceth with joy (χαρὰ χαίρει; cf. for this form of expression, which corresponds with the frequent Hebrew juxtaposition of the finite verb with the infinitive absolute, the LXX. of Isa. xxx. 19; lxvi. 10; Deut. vii. 26, etc.; Luke xxii. 15; Acts iv. 17; v. 28; xxiii. 14; Jas. v. 17). It is not an indubitable Hebraism, because similar expressions are found in the classics, as Plato, 'Sympos.' 195, B., φεβύων φυχῇ; 'Phædr.' 265, D.; Soph., 'Œd. Rcx.' 65; see Winer, 'Gramm. E. T.', p. 585. This is the only place where such a construction occurs in the writings of John) because of the bridegroom's voice. Intense joy is thus ascribed to one who was the minister of the bliss of another. This my joy—or, this joy, therefore, which is mine—hath been made full. "I have thus completed my task, and reached the climax of my bliss. I have wooed and won." The bridal of heaven and earth is begun. In subsequent words of Jesus and his disciples other great epochs of complete consummation are referred to. The joy of the Lord will only

be entirely realized when, after the resurrection and the second advent, the rapture of fellowship with his Bride will be completed. But the Baptist recognized that his own work was finished when the Messiah had been introduced to those who understood something of his claims, when the kingdom was at hand, when there were many who sought and found their Lord.

Ver. 30.—He must—by a Divine necessity of things (cf. vers. 7, 14; ch. ix. 4; x. 16; xx. 9; Rev. i. 1), he must—*increase; augment* in power and following and great joy. He must win eventually all hearts. His enemies must become the footstool of his feet. His is the beginning of an eternal blessedness. I must decrease; not become annihilated, though through the very completion of the purpose of my calling of God, my scope must, by the nature of the case, become narrower and smaller. Some have felt the improbability of the great prophet, the ascetic reformer, acquiescing so patiently in the diminution of his influence or the virtual cessation of the primary importance of his career. Yet this is in complete harmony with John's repeated and continuous recognition of the preparatory and transitory nature of his own work. He cannot lay down his commission, but he knows that, like prophetic, priesthood, Nazarite asceticism, and the like, it will be merged in the grander life of which he was the herald. The ministers of the New Testament all take up the same note of Divine praise and of self-depletion as they prepare the way of the Lord to human hearts. They hide themselves behind the greater glory of their Lord. However considerable their powers, they are serviceable only as they contribute to the glory, and succeed in unveiling the face, of their Lord. There is a Johannine message still required to disturb the fleshly equanimity and to break up the narcotized sleep of the unbeliever. The stern spirit of rebuke and warning is still indispensable; yet the voice of him that cries, "Repent!" knows that his voice may fade away into faint echoes and stillness, so soon as the promises of redemption and salvation are uttered by the Divine Lord. When the absolution of grace gives the kiss of peace to the broken-hearted, the morning star fades into the dawning of the day.

Vers. 31—36.—A large number of commentators of all schools hold that the remaining verses of this chapter give us the reflections of the evangelist rather than a continuous discourse of the Baptist. Strauss, Weiss, Reuss, and Bretschneider, who make the supposed proof of this Johannine appendix to the Baptist's words an evidence of inhistoricly throughout the Gospel, and the school of Baur, which finds in the entire

representation simply an artistic endeavour on the part of a second century *falsarius* to show that John's disciples were absorbed into the Catholic Church, are joined here by Bengel, De Wette, Westcott, Moulton, and Edersheim, who see no difficulty in the introduction of these sentiments, which correspond with those of the Epistles of John, as an appendix of the evangelist, and not a reminiscence of the teaching of the Baptist. The reasons in favour of this view are that the ideas and phraseology are said to be far in advance of John the Baptist's theological position, and certainly reflect the later teaching of the Master. We will consider some of these *seriatim*, but cannot accept the argument as final. Hengstenberg, Meyer, Godet, Alford, Lange, even Renan, do not yield to the positions thus assumed, nor will they admit any word of the Baptist here uttered to be inconsistent with the known doctrine of the forerunner; whereas they urge that the simple communication to John of the substance of our Lord's discourse to Nicodemus is adequate explanation of the similarities between the two. It may be admitted that some subjective colouring from the apostle's own mind may have been transfused by him into his report of both discourses, which we cannot doubt (whatever may be said about the Galilean ministry) were conducted in the Aramaic tongue. Weiss makes the pertinent suggestion that we cannot think that John the son of Zebedee heard the final testimony of the Baptist. It may easily have been communicated to the circle around Jesus by Andrew and some other disciple of the two masters. This may account for the appearance throughout the discourse of more Johannine language than usual. If we cannot, or may not, make these simple hypotheses, then we too should be disposed to think that the subjective element had so predominated as almost to hide the historic quality of the whole of this swanlike song of the Old Testament dispensation. But the hypotheses seem to be highly probable and extremely natural, and the coherence of the passage with what has gone before to be obvious and complete. The discourse contrasts the entire prophetic ministry with that of the Son of God (vers. 31, 32), which then sets forth the means of appropriating the Divine gift of the Son of God (vers. 33—35), and predicts the awful issues of rejecting the supreme claims of the Divine Lord (ver. 36). The teaching is in accord with Old Testament doctrine, illumined, as we learn that John's was, by special visions, and by communications to him of the significance of the Lord's uttered words. It is quite irrelevant, if not absurd, to say that such a testimony of the forerunner makes the con-

tinuance or spread of John's teaching and baptism impossible; for (1) the words were obviously addressed to a small group only of the many thousands who heard John preach; and (2) it does not follow that all those who heard these memorable words should have deserted their first master, even in deference to his own advice. The words that follow, whether a simple record of John's discourse or one deeply coloured by the subjectivity of the evangelist, are as follows:—

Ver. 31.—He that is coming from above is above all. Now, it is obvious that Jesus had spoken of the Son of man as having come down from heaven (ver. 13), and of his own power to speak of heavenly things (*i.e.* of causes and measures of Divine operations); and he contrasts these with the "earthly things" of which he too had spoken—"earthly" they were because they dealt with experiences felt and witnessed and realized on earth. Now, John is represented, on the occasion of the baptism of our Lord, as being convinced that Jesus was "the Son of God," and that his existence was prior to his own, and that his rank in the universe was one utterly transcending his own. These statements have been already put into the lips of John by the fourth evangelist, and are scarcely exceeded, if at all, by the utterance before us. We find a bold contrast between the Logos himself and the witness to the manifested Logos. *He who cometh from above*, being before John, and being, therefore, in his essential dignity, superior to him, *is above all*, and therefore above him. He that is, in his origin and the entire self-realization of his life, from the earth, and not incarnate Logos, is of the earth in quality, and speaketh of the earth (observe, not *κόσμος*, but *γῆ* is here used). The experiences to which he refers are enacted on the earth, and he has no power to go back and heavenwards for the full explanation of them. Higher than heaven are the thoughts and revelations of the Son of God. He can unveil the heart of the eternal Father. Christ can link his own work with the ministry of the mightiest of the Heaven-sent messengers; but John starts from the consciousness, the perils, the self-deceptions and contrition of man. *He that cometh out of heaven is above all.*<sup>1</sup> This great utterance

<sup>1</sup> The repetition of "is above all" (*ἐνδύω πάντων ἑστίν*) is omitted by the S, D, and some cursives, by Old Latin, Syriac and Armenian Versions, by Origen and Hilary; though it is found in N<sup>o</sup>, A, B, L, and other manuscripts, cursives, the Vulgate, Memphitic, Syriac Peschito, Æthiopic, and quoted by Chrysostom. The omission of the *καὶ* before the next clause is incumbent upon critics. It is omitted by N<sup>o</sup>, B, D, L, T, numerous cur-

is repeated, and it involves little more than what John had implied to the Sanhedrin (ch. i. 30-34).

Ver. 32.—That which he hath seen and heard, this he testifieth; or, *beareth witness to*. His pre-existent glory with the Father makes him the adequate Witness to the heavenly things (*ἐπουράνια*) of which he hath authoritatively spoken; *i.e.* the eternal love of the Father, the purpose of the Son being sent into the world from the heart of God, and its ultimate issues—eternal life to the believer, and condemnation to those who love the darkness and do not believe. Westcott, who regards these words as the free reflections of the evangelist, thinks that reference is being made to the continued testimony of the Church as the voice of Christ; but the spirit of the passage is obscured by this interpretation. The living present vocal testimony of Christ is being throughout contrasted with that of John. And no man receiveth his witness. This seems in direct antagonism to the language of the disciples, "All men come to him;" and to John's own language, "He must increase." Westcott regards it, again, as the melancholy reflection of the aged apostle towards the close of the century. This seems to me to be an inadequate explanation. The reception of the witness of Christ had moved the whole world when John wrote his Gospel; and it would be inconsistent with the tone of exhilaration with which the evangelist closes his work. The forerunner may, however, have used this strong expression in purposed contrast to the jealous language of his own followers. "No man"—in comparison with the multitudes who ought to have already accepted him as the Son of God, as the heavenly Bridegroom. The concourse who crowded to the baptism of Jesus for a little moment did not blind the Baptist to the persistent and malignant opposition which awaited Jesus. "His joy

sives, Harclean and Curetonian Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Persian. Origen omits it in the passage in which he retains the *ἐνδύω πάντων ἑστίν*, etc. A, Γ, Δ, and others sustain Lachmann and T.R. in retaining it. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Revised Version, Westcott and Hort, discard it. Now, in consequence of this, and the fine sense thus suggested, also because the authorities for the omission are stronger generally in their omissions than in their additions, Westcott and Moulton think the preferable reading of vers. 31, 32 to be, "He that cometh from heaven, that which he hath seen and heard, this he testifieth" (cf. margin Revised Version). Meyer, Tregelles, Godet, Luthardt, Revised Version, do not accept the argument, but maintain that this repetition of the clause is in the manner of John.

(ver. 29) and his grief (ver. 32) both formed a noble contrast to the jealousy of his own disciples" (Meyer).

Vers. 33—36.—(3) *The consequences of accepting and rejecting the supreme revelation.*

Ver. 33.—He that receiveth his witness—i.e. his testimony to what he hath personally seen and heard in the heaven from which he has come—sealed—(ἐσφράγισεν), confirmed by such very act, ratified and vindicated as trustworthy and stable (cf. Rom. iv. 11; xv. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Cor. i. 22). In other places the idea or image of a "seal" is used for guaranteeing a special commission, ch. vi. 27 (see notes); Rev. vii. 3; Eph. i. 13)—that God is true; i.e. admits that the words of Christ are the words of God, are absolute truth and reality—an idea which is made more obvious by ver. 34, where Jesus is the Ambassador of God. It may even mean more than this, viz. that in Jesus "all the promises of God are Yea and Amen," that God is true in himself, and the witness of Christ embraces all that for which prophecy and promise and previous revelation had prepared the way (see Luthardt and Westcott). Such an idea is certainly beyond the scope of John's ministry or message.

Ver. 34.—The γάρ shows that the former utterance is sustained. For he whom God sent uttereth the words of God. The full, many-sided, abundant expression of the thought of God. He has been sent for this purpose. Some take this clause to refer to all the ambassadors of God, and pre-eminently to the "man (ch. i. 6) sent from God, whose name was John." But, on the other hand, observe that throughout the Gospel, ἀπόστολλω and πέμπω are used of the "Lord from heaven" (ver. 17). Christ certainly is ἀπεσταλμένος as well as ἐρχομένος, and this great statement, viz. that Christ speaks the words of God, is a justification of the fact that, in accepting the witness of Christ to invisible and eternal things, and in the admission that he has been sent from heaven charged with the words of God, every separate believer becomes a seal, a ratification, of the veracity of God. The clause that follows (seeing that "to him" is unquestionably a gloss of translators, and is not found in any manuscripts) may be translated in three different ways. (1) *For God giveth not the Spirit by measure*; for if ὁ Θεός is omitted, still the same subject, "God," might be and is generally supplied, and the object, supposed to be either Christ or any

of his servants to whom in these days of the baptism of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost is poured forth from an inexhaustible treasure. Augustine and Calvin urged that it was said concerning Christ; for we read in ver. 35 that "the Father hath given all things into his hand;" but exclusively to limit the object of διδωσι to Christ is more than the passage will justify. (2) *For he (the Messiah, &c.) giveth not the Spirit by measure*; i.e. he is exalted to pour forth from the heart of the Deity the Spirit of the Father and Son. This is preferred by Westcott and by those who see in the entire passage the reflections of the author of the Gospel (cf. ch. xv. 26). (3) *For the Spirit giveth not by measure*; the object (&c.) being "the words of God," which he who is sent and is coming from heaven, and is above all, is now lavishing upon the world. This translation (Godet) is in harmony with the vision of John at the baptism, when the Holy Spirit after the manner of a dove descended and abode upon him. With an unmeasurable supply of spiritual energy was the humanity of him who came (quid his Divine nature and personality) from heaven enriched for his prophetic and Messianic functions as the beloved Son of God on earth. I see no difficulty in this last interpretation. (a) The present tense is justified by the statement of the abiding of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus, and the continuous operation of the gift in the "words of God," which were flowing from his lips. (b) The ἀντὶς is easily supplied in thought. (c) The connection is thus instituted with the thirty-fifth verse. Meyer and Lange prefer a wider significance being given to the words, seeing in them a broad reference to the affluence and measureless capacity of the gift of the Spirit. Luthardt: "This is true of all God's messengers, but especially of him of whom the Baptist speaks" (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 4—12). The Lord from heaven receives all the gifts of the Spirit.

Vers. 35, 36.—These final verses certainly have the ring of the Gospel as a whole, and correspond with the fulness of Christological teaching, with which the words of Christ abound, as well as the Epistle of John; yet there is no exact parallel in the later revelation. From whom could such a statement come with greater power than from him who heard the Divine voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him"? The Berleb. Bible (quoted by Hengstenberg) adds, to the great words, the Father loveth the Son, "as I sufficiently learned from the voice at the Jordan"—and hath given all things into his hand. The "all things" may be taken by us in their widest sense (of Matt. xi. 27)—"all ἐκείνα in heaven and earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18; cf. 1 Cor. xv. 27;

<sup>1</sup> i.e. if we retain the ὁ Θεός of T.R. which is omitted by N, B, C\*, L, T, with cursives, is marked doubtful by Lachmann, and is deleted by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T.

Rev. i. 18); and the power of determining the final condition of all souls, suggested in ver. 36. But we may conceive a less extended horizon limiting the vision of the Baptist: all things belonging to the kingdom of God, to the progress and consummation of it in the world. John need not be supposed to have swept onward into the eternal future, but mainly to have been thinking of the mutual relations of the forerunner and the Christ. The Son will determine the place of his herald and of his disciple. There is no limit expressed. He who had these matters entrusted to him might easily be supposed to have "all things in his hand." He rested the less upon the greater.

Ver. 36.—He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life (cf. here, vers. 16, 17; ch. xvii. 3; 1 John v. 10). These words, which above every other clause in this "swanlike song," are suffused with a glow that it is difficult to believe issued from the heart of the forerunner, unless we may make the supposition already referred to, that some of John's former disciples had carried to his earlier master the grand refrain of the discourse to Nicodemus. The entrusting of the soul in utter moral surrender to the Son of God, *is* life—eternal life. All cruel suspicions of God vanish when the veil is lifted which sin and the corruption of the human heart have hung over the holiest of all. John had passed into a new world when he discovered the true nature of the kingdom—the tempted, humbled, sacrificial, triumphant character of the Son of God. To believe on the Son is to have the life. But he that is disobedient to the Son. The words *ὁ ἀπειθῶν* are, in the English Version, translated "believeth not," and again so in Rom. xi. 30, where *ἀπιστεῖν* and *ἀπειθεῖν* are used interchangeably. The word means one who is (*ἀπειθής*) distrustful, who refuses to be persuaded, is contumacious and expresses the opposite to faith in active exercise, who repudiates faith on its fiducial and practical side. Nothing is said of those who have had no opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the Son of God. Shall not see life; shall not even see so as to be able to conceive of, much less enjoy, life (Westcott; see ver. 3). There is a *blinding* power in disobedience, which prevents those who are actively hostile to the essential excellences and glories of Christ from even knowing

what life *is*. Life is obviously here and elsewhere more than physical existence, or than its continuance, or than its resuscitation after death; it is the activity of the new spirit, the supernatural and eternal blessedness wrought by "birth of the Spirit." Nor is the calamity referred to a mere negation. John may be said here to have gone beyond the words of the Master in the previous discourse, and, moreover, it is in fiery earnestness that he speaks. The wrath of God, which has already been called down upon him by his disobedience, abideth on him. God's *ἀργή* had been spoken of by the Baptist (Matt. iii. 7; Luke iii. 7); and the term, wherever used, is far more than "the consuming fire of infinite love," into which many strive to resolve it. It represents active and terrible displeasure revealed from heaven (Rom. i. 18; iii. 5; 1 Thess. i. 10; ii. 16). Much of the wrath of the Lord is said to be temporary in its character (Wisd. xvi. 5; xviii. 20); but this is abiding, and, so far as is here revealed, permanent. The most terrible expression in the New Testament is the "wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 16). The last word of the Baptist, even in the Fourth Gospel, is a word of thunder, and he disappears from view when he has delivered this terrible condemnation on those who are wilfully, actively resisting that Son whom "the Father loves," and to whose hands he has "entrusted all things." The ministry of John is, after all, that of the Elijah, not that of the Christ. To the last word, even if the phraseology has been moulded in the Greek of the fourth evangelist into a closer resemblance to his own vocabulary,<sup>1</sup> and if by his attempt to epitomize what may have taken hours to say in varied phrase, the apostle has unconsciously adopted some of his own favourite terms, yet the message flashes with the fire of the prophet of the wilderness; and men are threatened with the peril of abiding under the wrath of Almighty God.

<sup>1</sup> If ver. 27 be compared with ch. xix. 11, ver. 29 with 1 John i. 4, ver. 33 with 1 John v. 10, ver. 35 with ch. xiii. 3, there is seen a decided adoption of the purely Johannine vocabulary; but there is much in it which "shows that we have genuine words of the Baptist repeated in a free Johannine way" (Weiss).

### HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—8.—*The interview of Christ with Nicodemus.* This brings before us one of the most important passages in Scripture.

I. NICODEMUS APPEARS HERE AS A RELIGIOUS INQUIRER. 1. He was "a ruler of the Jews." That is, not a civic magistrate, but a member of the Sanhedrin, which



governed the Jewish community in ecclesiastical concerns. 2. *He was a Pharisee.* The most popular and influential of the Jewish sects—narrow in its particularism, and with a zeal springing out of a selfish root. According to his view as a Pharisee, every Jew with the authorized ritualistic qualification would enter the Messianic kingdom as a matter of right, and saw in the Messiah the Head of a new kingdom that would annihilate Gentile powers and control the destiny of the world. 3. *Nicodemus was of a timid and compromising temper.* He came to Jesus "by night;" not, as some suppose, because he feared to give too much importance to the young Rabbi by coming openly, but because he feared to lose his credit with his unbelieving colleagues of the Sanhedrin. This timid spirit never left him, though he became somewhat stronger with experience; for he afterwards defended Jesus without acknowledging any personal interest in him (ch. vii. 51), and it was not till Jesus was dead and his body in the hands of Joseph of Arimathæa, that he brought the precious offering that displayed his faith. 4. *His curiosity in Jesus may have been excited by the report made to the Sanhedrin by the deputation that waited on John the Baptist.* His present secret visit, therefore, was one of inquiry as to whether Jesus was not the Messiah spoken of by the Baptist.

II. THE MODE OF HIS INQUIRY. "Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." 1. *He concedes that Jesus was a Rabbi,* though he had not received his knowledge from the rabbinical schools, but "from God" himself. 2. *He concedes his miracle-working power as an evidence of his Divine mission.* This was in accordance with our Lord's own declaration at another time, that "his works bore witness that the Father sent him" (ch. v. 36). It is suggestive that Nicodemus uses the very expression of Peter when, in describing our Lord's ministry and miracles, that apostle said, "God was with him" (Acts x. 38). 3. *Yet he does not concede our Lord's Messiahship, much less his Divinity as the Son of God.* He calls him simply "a Teacher," as if he were not different from other teachers. This was the error of Nicodemus. 4. *Yet his inquiry, though not formally expressed, was for further light*—as to how far this teaching and these miracles betokened the dawn of the Messiah's kingdom.

III. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO HIS INQUIRY. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." We have here the statement of the doctrine of regeneration by the Holy Ghost. The answer is, in substance, "You are asking, Am I the Messiah, and is my kingdom near, as my miracles seem to testify? I answer that my kingdom is at hand; but it is not a kingdom that men see coming 'with observation,' but a spiritual state into which men enter by a transformation of character." 1. *Our Lord asserts the fact of the new birth.* (1) This new phrase is used six times in this Gospel, six times in the First Epistle of John, and once in the First Epistle of Peter. It marks the starting-point of a new spiritual experience. (2) It is more than moral renovation or outward conformity to a rule of life. (3) It is more than baptism, to which some think it a theological equivalent; for baptism was no mystery to the Pharisees, as this new birth appeared to be, for they were familiar with the baptism of proselytes. (4) It signified the change of heart which is wrought by the Spirit of God, when a sinner believes repentingly on Jesus Christ. It is no mere fact of New Testament experience (Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26). (5) Yet it was a mystery to Nicodemus, notwithstanding his presumed knowledge of Scripture; else he never would have asked the absurd question, "How can a man be born when he is old?" He confounded a second beginning with a different beginning—the sphere of nature with the sphere of grace. 2. *Our Lord asserts the condition of this new birth, and the agent in its accomplishment.* "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The usual interpretation is that the water refers to a definite external rite—baptism—and to an internal spiritual operation. The theory of baptismal regeneration points to this passage as one of its favourite proofs. Many able divines, however, believe that there is no allusion whatever here to Christian baptism. (1) Because this ordinance was not then instituted, though the baptism of John must have been familiar to Nicodemus. (2) Because, if the expression, "born of water," refers to baptism, and the expression, "born of the Spirit," to regeneration, they are distinct. The very use of the two terms implies that baptism will not of itself

save. (3) Because, in an analogous passage, "He who believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," baptism and faith are not regarded as the same thing. There may be baptism without faith, and faith without baptism. (4) Because to understand baptism by "the water" here involves the absurdity of extending the same meaning to the word everywhere in this Gospel wherever anything spiritual is meant by water. But let it be conceded that "born of water" does refer to baptism, there is nothing in the passage to justify the theory of regeneration by baptism. (1) Consider that John the Baptist made a marked distinction between baptism by water and baptism by the Holy Ghost. He could administer the one; Jesus only could administer the other. (2) As Pusey concedes there was no such thing as baptismal regeneration till the Spirit was given after the ascension of Christ, there could have been no such thing when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus—no possibility of a man on that night being born both of water and of the Spirit. (3) Scripture uniformly represents faith, not baptism, as necessary to salvation. As a matter of fact, faith was, in adults, regarded as necessary to baptism; and as faith is the pure effect of regeneration, regeneration can, no more than faith, be the effect of baptism. We have instances in the New Testament of regeneration *before* baptism, and therefore without baptism; therefore baptism does not regenerate (Acts x. 44—48; etc.). (4) Much as John speaks of regeneration in his First Epistle, he never connects it with baptism. Yet, in naming the tests of regeneration, he never includes baptism among them. (5) Regeneration is expressly referred to the Word, and not to baptism (1 Pet. i. 23; Jas. i. 18). There is an analogy, indeed, in the relation of baptism and the Word respectively to salvation. The Word saves, as baptism saves; yet all who hear it do not believe, just as all the baptized are not regenerated. (6) If "water" in the text means baptism, then baptism is necessary to salvation. Then, all the unbaptized, not to speak of the whole body of the Quakers, are lost. (7) This theory implies that all the baptized are saved. Yet Simon Magus was still unregenerate after his baptism. (8) If this theory be true, people are born of God who have not a single mark of regeneration, but rather every sign of godless apostasy. (9) Such an interpretation makes it difficult to understand why our Lord rebuked Nicodemus for not knowing it: "Knowest thou not these things?" He knew there was baptism, but he did not know it involved regeneration. (10) If baptism is equivalent to regeneration, why should it be so seldom referred to in Scripture? Faith, which is the true means of our salvation, is mentioned everywhere. Yet baptism is only mentioned twice in Romans, seven times in Corinthians, only once in Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews, and Peter.

IV. THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH. "That which is of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is of the Spirit, is spirit." Nicodemus had spoken of a man entering once more into his mother's womb, and being born again. Our Lord declares that if such a thing were possible, it would not effect the new birth. Children will always be like their parents. Grace does not descend with blood. Therefore there is a profound necessity for the life of the Spirit being imparted by the Spirit.

V. THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW BIRTH. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, . . . but thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." We cannot account for the beginning, or the influence, or the direction of the wind. So there is deep mystery in the action of the Holy Spirit upon the spirit of man; for while man preserves his absolute moral freedom, the Spirit works in him to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

VI. THE EVIDENCE OF THE NEW BIRTH. "Thou hearest the sound thereof." We cannot know all the mysteries of the wind, but we see and feel the effects of its presence in nature. So the mystery of regeneration comes visibly to the surface of Christian life in the fruits of that life.

Vers. 9—13.—*The advent of a wholly new teaching.* Nicodemus asks in surprise, "How can these things be?" And Jesus, with equal surprise, asks how a teacher in Israel can be ignorant of them. Then he discloses a new scheme of truth.

1. THE NEW TEACHING. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." Mark: 1. *Its nature.* "That we do know." (1) Jesus knows the truth, for he is the Truth itself. (2) He imparts it by the Spirit of truth. (3) It is a blessed thing to know what he knows—"the truth as it is in Jesus." 2. *Its source.* "That

we have seen." Man believes, for he must here walk by faith, not by sight; but Jesus sees. He has seen heaven, and knows all heavenly realities by immediate intuition. 3. *It is truth to be openly declared.* "We speak . . . we testify." Jesus and his disciples are witnesses to the truth. 4. *Yet it was rejected by the rabbinical teachers.* "And ye receive not our testimony." (1) The Pharisees "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized by him [John]" (Luke vii. 30). The acceptance of John's work involved the acceptance of that of Jesus. (2) Our Lord desires Nicodemus to break with his party.

II. FAITH IS NEEDED FOR THE RECEPTION OF THIS NEW TEACHING. "If I told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" There is an evident contrast between two classes of truths. 1. *Earthly things.* (1) These were not things touching worldly interests, much less carnal things. (2) But things within the sphere of man's knowledge and appreciation, affecting the life of the soul. The new birth itself, though "a heavenly thing," has its life and manifestation on earth. The earthly things are the elements of spiritual knowledge, having their test in the moral sense, and in their fitness to supply the spiritual wants of men. (3) The moral fitness of the gospel is one main guarantee of its Divinity. 2. *Heavenly things.* These are the secrets of Heaven which are to be received on the word of Christ. The knowledge of earthly things will initiate us into the knowledge of heavenly things. Evidently our Lord classes among heavenly things the revelation he makes in the following verses respecting the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

III. THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW TEACHING. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." Jesus knows heavenly things because heaven is his native home. 1. *These words imply the Incarnation of the Son of God;* for they imply his pre-existence. 2. *They imply his possession of two natures in one Person;* for he who is the Son of man as to his human nature, is in heaven in his Divine nature. 3. *They imply that during his human life he received an immediate intuition of heavenly things.* 4. *They imply that heaven is a place as well as a state.*

VERS. 14, 15.—*The revelation of the Divine plan of salvation.* Redemption is the essential content of revelation. The Incarnation carries with it the necessity of the Crucifixion.

I. THE NATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SYMBOL HERE PRESENTED TO OUR VIEW. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." 1. *This refers to the last miracle wrought by Moses on the borders of the promised land.* (Numb. xxi. 7.) 2. *The Israelites were to see in it the sovereign hand of God, and not to ascribe the efficacy of the cure to the mere outward symbol—the brazen serpent—apart from Divine power.* 3. *They were to see in the whole incident, not a mere effective comparison, but a preparatory type—a figure of "good things to come,"* exhibiting (1) the punishment of sin, (2) and the image of a vicarious dispensation. "By his stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii. 5).

II. THE WORK OF CHRIST. "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." 1. *Consider the meaning of this expression.* (1) It does not signify that he was to be exalted in the sight of men in the preaching of the gospel. (2) Nor does it signify his exaltation to heaven. (3) But his being lifted up on the cross. This is the commentary of the apostle himself: "This he said, signifying what death he should die" (ch. xii. 33). The cross was to be the step to the throne. 2. *There was a Divine necessity for the death of Christ.* "The Son of man must be lifted up." (1) The Divine prophecies must be fulfilled. (2) The justice of God demanded the sacrifice. Sin can no more exist without punishment than it can exist without hatefulness. The justice of God is as manifest as his grace in the death of his Son. (3) The love of God was the grand motive for this sacrifice. (4) The necessity of Christ's death is attested by many passages of Scripture (Heb. vii. 29; viii. 3; ix. 7, 12, 22).

III. THE DESIGN OF THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST. "That whosoever believeth in him should have eternal life." Mark the various points of comparison between the type and the antitype. 1. *The poison of the serpents in the wilderness represents the deadly nature of sin.* That poison was death; so sin is death. 2. *The gaze of the stricken Israelites answers to the look of faith.* "There was life in a look." (1) Faith is the

eye of the soul looking to a Saviour. "Look unto me, and be ye saved" (Isa. xlv. 22). (2) The look implied a dependence in the divinely appointed remedy. 3. *The brazen serpent answers to Christ the Son of man.* We admit none of the fancies of divines respecting this matter. The one point of analogy was in the "lifting up." Jesus is the Object to be looked at by faith; and, as such, is seen (1) in the excellence of his Person, (2) in the completeness of his work, (3) in the fulness of his grace. 4. *The healing of the Israelites answers to that eternal life which is the result of faith.* Thus the death of Christ is indispensable to the life of believers. And it stands in causal connection with eternal life as their inheritance. This passage proves not, as some divines say, that life is first, and that the acceptance of the sinner flows from the life; but that acceptance flows from Christ's death, and that life issues out of the acceptance.

**Ver. 16.**—*The immensity of God's love to the world.* The apostle here emphasizes the love which was manifest in the method of salvation.

**I. THE TRUE ORIGIN OF SALVATION.** "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." It is God's love, infinite, eternal, unchangeable. 1. *Salvation is not wrung from the Father by the Son.* The atonement was the effect, not the cause, of God's love. 2. *This love is no contradiction to the wrath of God,* which is implied in this very verse as the doom of unbelievers. 3. *It is not inconsistent with the justice of God;* for love is here defined as giving the Son to a sacrificial death, which signifies the satisfaction of Divine justice. 4. *It is not possible to resolve justice into love under the idea of "a dualism of the Divine attributes;"* for they are each distinct attributes: as in love God gives, in justice he maintains his inalienable prerogatives as God. 5. *Christ does not set forth God's love with the mere object of assuring us of its reality,* but rather to magnify it by the value of the sacrifice which was the design of it. 6. *Love is not sacrificed to justice,* but becomes all the more transcendently glorious because of the Divine necessity for a satisfaction to justice.

**II. THE INFINITE SACRIFICE FOR THE WORLD.** "He gave his only begotten Son." 1. *It was the Son of God who was given by God.* In the previous verse his title is the Son of man, which recalls his humiliation. Here his title recalls his Divine dignity. The union of the two natures in the Person of the Mediator gives an infinite value to his sacrifice. 2. *The gift of the Son implies his sacrificial death.* (1) The words do not point to God's purpose of salvation. (2) Nor to the gift of the Son to the believer in the application of redemption by his Spirit. (3) But to his being given up to death, whether it refers to the Father's act in giving him (Rom. viii. 32), or to the Son's act in giving himself (Matt. xx. 28; Gal. i. 4). The expression points to sacrifice, because the offerer of the victim in the Levitical economy presented it himself as part of the established ceremony. 3. *The unworthy objects of this love.* "God so loved the world." (1) It would be a startling announcement to Nicodemus, with all the narrow particularism of the Pharisee, that this love was destined to extend to the whole world of man outside the borders of Judaism. (2) There is nothing in God's love to the world inconsistent with his wrath against sin. He loves all his creatures, but he hates and punishes their sin, and will not imperil the effects of his love while the obstacles caused by sin stand in the way.

**III. THE DESIGN OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.** "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." 1. *The channel of Divine life is opened by faith.* (1) Faith accepts the Divine testimony respecting Christ as the Redeemer (1 John v. 10). (2) Faith is the instrument of our justification, as it is the means of apprehending the righteousness of Christ. (3) Faith is the root-principle of Christian life (Gal. ii. 20). 2. *The tremendous evil that is averted.* "Should not perish." This implies (1) separation from God both here and hereafter (2 Thess. i. 9); (2) the sufferings of hell (Rev. xx. 10, 15); (3) an eternity of punishment (Matt. xxv. 46). 3. *The infinity of the blessings received by faith.* "Everlasting life." It is contrasted (1) with the wrath of God (ch. iii. 36); (2) with destruction (Matt. vii. 13, 14); (3) with eternal fire (Matt. xviii. 9); (4) with judgment or death (ch. v. 24). (5) It is everlasting in duration, as well as in excellence.

**Vers. 17—21.**—*The Incarnation regarded respectively in its design and in its actual result.* **I. THE DESIGN OF THE INCARNATION.** "For God sent not his Son into the

world to judge the world; but that the world through him might be saved." 1. *It was for the salvation of the world.* (1) There was no longer a merely particularistic dispensation, but one that included the whole race of man. (2) It was not a mere design to include the race within an area of religious privileges. (3) It was a design to save man (a) from the guilt of sin, (b) from the power of sin, (c) and to give him an eternal inheritance in glory. 2. *It was not for the judgment of the world.* The Jews expected the kingdom for the Jews, and judgment for the Gentiles. (1) The text does not imply that the Son of man will not judge the world in the great day. This will be his personal act. (2) It implies that the advent of the Messiah would not, as the Jews fondly imagined, involve an immediate judgment of the Gentiles or nations. (3) But the salvation brought by the Messiah, though not including judgment, was, by the act of men themselves, a preparation for judgment.

II. THE ACTUAL RESULT OF THE INCARNATION—A JUDGMENT. "To judge is to prove a man's moral state by a detailed examination of his acts." The judgment is not condemnation, for it may be favourable or otherwise. 1. *The application of the judgment.* "He that believeth on him is not judged: but he that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (1) Judgment does not touch the believer, because, being in Christ, there is no condemnation against him (Rom. viii. 1). The death of the Surety is his guarantee against judgment. (2) Judgment rests on the unbeliever by the very fact of his unbelief. (a) The greatest sin is unbelief, because it is a rejection of God's dear Son, his sacrifice, his work. (b) This unbelief reveals the moral tendency of the man. It is a mistake to think that unbelief is a purely intellectual act. It is moral as well as intellectual. 2. *The peculiarity of the judgment.* "And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light." The unbeliever unveils his moral state by rejecting Christ. (1) The light—which is Christ—is offered, setting forth the revelation of God in the clearest manner. In that light men might well see (a) themselves and (b) Christ. (2) The darkness is chosen because it is loved more than light. (a) It is hard to conceive of a rational creature loving darkness, walking in it, having fellowship with the works of darkness, because darkness suggests the idea (a) of stumbling, (β) of discomfort, (γ) of danger. (b) The reason of their choice. "Because their deeds were evil." (a) Thus the evil life reacts upon the mental judgment. (β) The unbeliever is resolved to continue in his evil, and therefore will not allow the light to fall upon him.

III. THE CAUSE OF THIS SELF-EXECUTING RESULT. There is a twofold moral state. 1. *Those who do evil hide from the light, because they dread its manifesting power.* "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." (1) This displays the cowardice of man in unbelief. He is afraid of himself. He is afraid to see himself as he really is in the sight of God's unerring Law. (2) It displays the folly of man, for there is a day coming in which the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest. No sinner can escape from final judgment. (3) It shows how the principle of unbelief is more moral than intellectual. 2. *The true believer seeks the light, because he seeks the manifestation of his divinely done acts.* "Right action is true thought realized" in the case of the "doer of truth." (1) He recognizes the true source of all his holy deeds—they are "wrought in God;" for God works in him to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. ii. 14, 15). (2) He seeks to give God the glory of his obedience (1 Cor. x. 31). (3) The manifesting light is (a) lovely, (b) comforting, (c) stimulating.

Ver. 22.—*The ministry of our Lord in the country districts of Judæa.* I. MARK THE INCESSANT ACTIVITY OF OUR LORD. "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized." 1. *He passed from the city to the country, finding, perhaps, a happy change in the simplicity and docility of the peasantry.* If he is rejected in Jerusalem, he will appeal to the people of Judæa outside the religious centre. He went about every day doing good. 2. *He baptized disciples.* (1) His baptism was preparatory to the establishment of his kingdom, like John's baptism. (2) The baptism was administered by the disciples, yet by his authority. It was less ostentatious to employ the disciples, as the ordinance involved the acceptance of himself as Saviour.

**II. MARK THE SUCCESS OF HIS COUNTRY MINISTRY.** The baptisms implied that he had collected disciples. "All men come unto him." The success that was denied to him in Jerusalem was most marked in the places where the representatives of the reigning Pharisaism had no place.

**Vers. 23—30.**—*The relation between our Lord and his forerunner.* Jesus seems to have followed in the footsteps of John, who was still at large, baptizing disciples in the southern borders of Judæa.

**I. THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE JEWS AND JOHN'S DISCIPLES.** The subject of dispute. "About purifying." It was caused by the competition of the two baptisms, and turned upon the best mode of true purification. 1. *The Jews might ascribe greater efficacy to Jesus' baptism than to John's.* 2. *John's disciples might claim the honour of superiority, because their master's baptism was the first in point of time.* 3. *The Jews might argue that John's was unnecessary now that Christ had come.* 4. *John's disciples might argue that their master's baptism was still necessary as a preparation for the Messiah.*

**II. CONSIDER HOW JOHN SETTLES THE CONTROVERSY.** 1. *The Baptist does not resolve it directly at all, for he makes no allusion to the question of baptism.* 2. *He resolves it by pointing out, with a noble and touching humility, the exact relation existing between himself and our Lord, as one not of opposition or comparison at all.* (1) He represents the greater success of Jesus as due to God. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." It is God's will, not man's energy or zeal, that secures success. (2) He reminds his disciples that he had all along consistently represented his mission as purely provisional. "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him." (3) He distinctly marks the inferior place assigned to himself. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." He is himself not the Bridegroom, but his friend. (a) The bride is the Messianic community; (b) Christ is the Bridegroom; (c) John is "the friend of the Bridegroom," whose office it was to bring them together. (4) He is perfectly satisfied with this position. "This my joy therefore is fulfilled." He is delighted to hear the Bridegroom's voice, and to be the agent of bringing the Jews to recognize his Messiahship. 3. *He regards his own importance as destined to diminish from day to day before the increasing acceptance of the Messiah.* "He must increase, but I must decrease." (1) It is a great trial to human pride to efface one's self in the midst of a career of extraordinary popularity, while the energies of life are still unbroken, and the hopes of expanding usefulness are strong in the heart. (2) As a test of character, this declaration marks the true greatness of the Baptist. There is something sublime as well as touching in his humility.

**Vers. 31—36.**—*The Baptist's confirmation of his statement respecting the superiority of Christ.* He gives several reasons why Jesus must increase, and he himself must decrease.

**I. THE ORIGIN OF JESUS.** "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth." 1. *Jesus belongs to heaven; the Baptist to the earth.* 2. *Jesus is above all servants of God; the Baptist is one of his servants.* 3. *Jesus must ever eclipse all his servants, causing them to fade away like the morning star before the sun; they find their true enjoyment in the resplendent glory of Christ.* 4. *John is hemmed in by the peculiar limitations of an earthly existence; his ideas are derived and dependent; he sees heavenly realities from the imperfect standpoint of faith. He can summon the world to repentance, but he cannot give repentance.*

**II. THE PERFECTION OF CHRIST'S TEACHING.** "And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth." 1. *His Divine origin secures the unique glory of his teaching; for, being in the bosom of the Father, he is acquainted with all his counsels. He is a witness who has both seen and heard what he declares to man.* 2. *Consider the perverse unbelief that rejects the teaching.* "And no man receiveth his testimony." Jerusalem, as the religious centre of Judaism, gives it no welcome. 3. *The believer's witness to the truth of God.* "He that receiveth his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." (1) The Jews' rejection was not total. There were many believers in Christ's words. (2) The believer bears his testimony—the testimony of his inward experience—to the

truth of God, just as the unbeliever makes God a liar (1 John ii. 4). What a grand reality is faith! (3) The reason of Christ's words being the very truth of God; for "God giveth not the Spirit by measure." Therefore he is "full of grace and truth," and "in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." 4. *Christ's filial dignity and sovereignty.* "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." (1) The love of the Father is the source of all gifts to the Head, and, through the Head, to the members. (2) The sovereignty in the hands of Christ enables him to make all things work together for the good of his people. He has a hand of power, of pity, of blessing, always stretched out over his Church. 5. *The practical consequence of the Son's supremacy in the twofold issue of life.* (1) *The issue of eternal life.* "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (a) The nature of faith. (a) It is not a mere belief in the Son's Godhead, or Mediatorship, or ability to give life; it is not a mere assent to Divine testimony concerning the Son. (β) It is an actual trusting in the Son, and therefore an act of the will and the heart as well as of the understanding. (b) The object of faith. "The Son," who is able to save, (a) because he is the Son of God, and therefore Divine; (β) because he is the Son of man, and therefore human. Faith derives all its importance from its object. (c) The connection between faith and life. Faith brings the sinner into possession of everlasting life, because it unites him to Christ as his life. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. ii. 20). (2) *The issue of abiding wrath.* "But he that disobeyeth the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (a) Unbelief is disobedience, as faith is obedience, to the Son of God. Thus it is essentially a practical principle controlling conduct. (b) The guilt of disobedience is enhanced by the supreme dignity of him to whom it is due. (c) Disobedience is incapacity to see life. The sinner has (a) no conception of its nature, (β) and no enjoyment of its blessings. (d) The retribution of disobedience is permanent. (a) So long as a sinner obstinately refuses to receive the Son of God, there is nothing to break the connection established by Divine law between disobedience and wrath. "The wrath of God abideth on him." (β) There is wrath as well as love in God. (γ) The last words of this discourse represent the last words of the Old Testament—for the warning voice of the Baptist is no more heard; and they recall the closing sentence of that Testament, "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

**Ver. 3.**—*Christianity the kingdom of God.* From this language of the Lord Jesus, employed thus early in his ministry, we learn what was his own conception of the religion he came to found amongst men. It is reasonable to believe that the Jewish theocracy suggested the form and type of the new and perfect religion. The Divine wisdom had instituted a State which was intended to serve, and which had served, the purpose of introducing into the world ideas of the eternal righteousness. But the Jewish nation was only a shadow of the Christian Church. We are accustomed usually to speak of Jesus as the Saviour, and to picture Christianity under its gentler aspect as a fellowship and a family. But Christ claimed to be a *King*, and represented his Church as a *kingdom*. Not that this aspect is exclusive of others. But our Lord stated the plain truth, and his statements should be taken as a rebuke to all merely sentimental and selfish views of religion.

**I. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IS RULED BY A DIVINE SOVEREIGN.** Absolute monarchy is among men distrusted on account of the imperfections and weaknesses of human nature. The autocrat is usually a tyrant. But Christ, being the Son of God, and the incarnation of Divine wisdom, justice, and clemency, is fitted to rule; and his sway is acknowledged as deserving of implicit submission on the part of all mankind.

**II. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IS COMPOSED OF CONSECRATED HUMAN NATURES.** The empire of the Creator over the inanimate and the brute creation is perfect. The Lord Jesus came to reassert and re-establish the Divine dominion over intelligent and spiritual beings. That these are in a sense subject to Divine authority is not disputed. But Christ desires a voluntary and cheerful obedience. Unwilling subjects afford him no satisfaction. To rule over the bodily and outward life of men is an object of human

ambition. But the kingdoms of this world, and their glory, have no charm for Christ. It is in human hearts that he desires and loves to reign. He has undoubtedly an external empire; but this he possesses in virtue of his spiritual sway.

III. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IS GOVERNED BY RIGHTEOUS LAWS. The ordinances of earthly governments aim at justice, and in varying degrees they secure their aim. Yet they partake of human imperfection. But of the laws of Christ, and of his apostles, who spoke with his authority, we may say that they are the expressions of the Eternal Mind. It is no grievance to obey them. They realize our moral ideals, *i.e.* in their intention and requirements. Their observance tends to the highest human good and well-being. Their practical and universal prevalence would make earth heaven.

IV. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IS ENTERED BY COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL. Men are born subjects of the Queen of England; but they must be born anew of water and of the Spirit, in order that they may become subjects of the Lord Christ. Both the Catholic and the Puritan ideas of regeneration convey this truth. The one lays more stress upon the baptism, which symbolizes a heavenly influence; the other upon the individual experience, which emphasizes the spiritual personality. Both alike agree with the scriptural assertion that Christianity, in its Divine completeness, involves men's participation in newness of convictions, newness of feeling, newness of principle, newness of life. The new birth begins the new life. The birth, no doubt, directs our thoughts to a Divine agency; the new life leads us to think of the human co-operation. And the kingdom of the just and holy Christ is characterized both by the Divine provision and by the human acceptance, both by the Divine authority and the human submission.

V. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM IS DISTINGUISHED BY MANY AND VALUABLE PRIVILEGES. The citizenship of a great nation, of a powerful city, is prized among men for the sake of its accruing honours and advantages. *Civis Romanus sum* was no empty boast. Far greater are the immunities and honours and joys connected with citizenship in the kingdom of Christ. The safety which is experienced beneath Divine protection, the happiness which flows from Divine favour, the spiritual profit which accompanies submission to Divine requirements,—these are some of the privileges accorded to such as are within, unknown to such as are without, the heavenly kingdom of the Son of God.

VI. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM HAS BEFORE IT A DESTINY BRIGHT AND GLORIOUS. All earthly kingdoms bear within them the seeds of corruption and decay. From these the spiritual state is free. It is subject to no "decline and fall." Because Divine, it is incorruptible; and because incorruptible, imperishable—"an everlasting kingdom, a dominion enduring unto all generations."—T.

Ver. 7.—"Born anew!" The turn which our Lord Jesus gave to this conversation with Nicodemus must have been a great surprise to the "teacher of Israel." The thoughts of the rabbi seem to have run, naturally enough, upon outward and tangible realities. To him a prophet was authenticated by "signs;" a "kingdom" was something of political interest, "birth" was physical, etc. Christ's way of looking at religion, and at the religious life, evidently perplexed him. Yet it would seem that afterward, when these new ideas had penetrated his mind, he came to sympathize with the mission and the methods of the Messiah. He exchanged his carnal views for such as were spiritual, his timidity for boldness, his questioning for a confident faith.

I. THE SUBJECT OF THE NEW BIRTH. In opposition to the prejudices of Nicodemus, who at first could think only of a body as susceptible of birth, our Lord taught that the *spirit* of man may be born anew, and must be so born in order to the experience of highest blessing.

II. THE NEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. This is to be remarked in the nature of the old and unregenerate life. The soul which is misled by error, which is abandoned to sin, which is strange to the favour of God, needs to be born anew. Carnal views of religion, selfish principles of life, need to be eradicated from the soul. But evil is so inwrought into man's constitution and habits that he needs to be spiritually reconstructed in order that he may see as God sees, feel as God feels, act as God wills.

III. THE POWER OF THE NEW BIRTH. The change to be effected is so radical and so complete that no human means can avail to bring it about. Hence, as our Lord teaches, the necessity for the operations of the Spirit of God—mighty, though mysterious, as the



rush of the wind when it bends the trees of the forest and roars in its fierceness, though man can neither see nor comprehend it. This we know: that if the spirit of man is the scene of transforming operations, if spiritual results are to be wrought, the Spirit of God alone can account for such a process.

IV. THE PROOF OF THE NEW BIRTH. In a word, this is the *new life*. The interest of birth lies in the life to which it is the introduction. So is it in the spiritual realm. The higher, the spiritual life, is a contrast to the old; it is marked by all that is divinely excellent and beautiful, and it is immortal, being perfected only in the presence and the fellowship of God himself.—T.

Ver. 8.—*The wind and the Spirit*. Things natural are the emblems of things spiritual. It is no accident that in this very verse the same word is used to designate the wind that blows upon the surface of the earth, and the Spirit that breathes over the souls of men. In many languages the breeze or the breath is the symbol of the unseen vital principle that distinguishes living beings from the material universe, and even of the higher and properly spiritual nature. Our Lord in this passage of his conversation with Nicodemus extends the symbolism from the principle to its agency, and illustrates the working of the Spirit of God by a reference to the mysterious movement of the wind. The parallelism appears in—

I. THE ORIGIN. Man is powerless to cause the wind to blow from one quarter or from another, for the wind is one of the great forces of nature, *i.e.* of the operation of God, the Maker and Lord of all. In like manner, the Spirit of truth and holiness is the Spirit of God. No man can claim credit for his influences; they belong to the super-human system which is independent of human wisdom or skill. If the Church of Christ is the creation of the Spirit (*ubi Spiritus, ibi Ecclesia*), it is not an institution of human origin and device, but an organism into which God himself has breathed the breath of life.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS. 1. The wind is *invisible*, and the same is the case with the Spirit of God, who is perceived by no one of the senses. Invisibility is no proof of the unreality of the breeze or the gale. The influence of the Spirit of God is upon human souls, and cannot be traced by the action of the senses; but that influence is as real as is that of any force, whether material or psychical. 2. The Spirit of God resembles the wind in the *secret and inscrutable character* of his operations. That there are meteorological laws is not questioned; but the forces that account for the wind are so many and so complicated, that they are even now only very partially understood. At all events, the variations of the atmosphere were altogether unknown to Nicodemus, and the argument was obviously effective for him. In like manner, the operations of God's Spirit are mysterious; they take place in the recesses of the soul; their method is often incomprehensible by us. Yet there is nothing arbitrary or capricious in these operations; they are all the manifestations of Divine wisdom and goodness. The workings of the Holy Ghost are present where we, perhaps, should little have expected them. Not only can we not prescribe to God how he *should* work; we cannot always tell how he *has* worked. He evidently has many direct channels by which his Spirit approaches the souls of men.

III. THE RESULTS. If we cannot see the wind or trace its modes of action, we are at no loss to understand and appreciate its effects. We hear its sound, we feel its force, we perceive its presence by its works. The Spirit makes his efficacy apparent by his fruits. 1. How *powerful* is the Spirit of God! The wind, by its steady blowing, turns the sails of the mill, propels the ship across the ocean; by its vehemence, in the form of a hurricane or a whirlwind, destroys great works, uproots trees, unroofs houses. But what is this, as evidence of power, compared with the effects wrought by the Holy Spirit in human hearts—in human society? Here we see the mightiest works of the Supreme. 2. How *various* are the tokens of the Spirit's working! The wind may be Boreas or Zephyr; may sink into a sigh or wax into a roar; may pile the clouds in masses, or drive the mists like sheep before it, or fling the hail abroad. And the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, of conviction, of holiness, of consolation. The same Spirit distributes varied gifts to men "severally as he will." None can limit, none can even trace out, the diversity of spiritual operations. 3. How *beneficent* is the Spirit of God in his working! The wind *does* harm; yet its action, on the whole, is advantageous. But

the Holy Ghost not only works good; he works nothing but good. He who is "born of the Spirit" is born to a new, a holy, a Divine life. A spiritual dispensation is the occasion of hope to this humanity, imparts to it a prospect which otherwise the most sanguine would not venture to dream of. A ransomed humanity thus becomes a renewed humanity, and renewal is the pledge of glorification. From the four winds the breath comes and breathes upon the slain; and the dead live, and "stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army."—T.

**Vers. 14, 15.—An emblem of salvation.** It was Christ's teaching that Moses testified of him. This Moses did by foretelling the advent of a prophet like unto himself, and still more strikingly by the whole system of sacrifice which he perfected, and which the Messiah both fulfilled and superseded. He did so likewise by symbolic acts, thus unconsciously witnessing to Christ and his works. It was natural that our Lord's first mention of Moses should occur in his conversation with a Hebrew rabbi, an inquirer, and a sympathizing inquirer into his claims. The incident in Jewish history upon which our Lord grafts great spiritual lessons was one familiar, doubtless, to Nicodemus, but one of which he could never until now have seen the deep spiritual significance.

**I. THE SERPENT-BITE IS THE EMBLEM OF SIN.** For the moral evil is, like the venom of the viper, (1) diffused in action; (2) rapid in progress; (3) painful to experience; (4) dangerous and deadly in result.

**II. THE DEATHS IN THE CAMP OF ISRAEL ARE THE EMBLEMS OF THE SPIRITUAL CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.** Scripture consistently represents death, *i.e.* moral, spiritual death, as the natural and appointed result of subjection to sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "The wages of sin is death." If spiritual life is the vigorous exercise, in the way appointed by heavenly wisdom, of the faculties of our intelligent and voluntary nature, spiritual death consists in the deprivation of power, in the cessation or suspension of such activities as are acceptable to God.

**III. THE BRAZEN SERPENT IS AN EMBLEM OF THE DIVINE REDEMPTIVE REMEDY.**

1. Like the figure placed upon the banner-staff, the provision for salvation from spiritual death is due to Divine mercy. Christ is the Gift of God; the power of spiritual healing is Divine power; the ransom paid is appointed and accepted by God. 2. In both there is observable a remarkable connection between the disease and the cure. It was not without significance that the remedy provided in the wilderness bore a resemblance to the disease. Christ too was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in a human body endured for us that death which is the penalty of sin.

**IV. THE ELEVATION OF THE BRAZEN SERPENT UPON THE POLE WAS AN EMBLEM OF OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION AND EXALTATION.** It is observable how early in his ministry Jesus referred to his "lifting up." That he by this language indicated his crucifixion does not admit of question. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man;" "I, if I be lifted up from the earth;"—are instances which show how distinctly Jesus foresaw and foretold his death, and even the manner of it. The consistency is manifest between this elevation of sacrificial death and the subsequent elevation to the throne of eternal glory.

**V. THE LOOKING AT THE LIFTED FIGURE OF THE SERPENT IS AN EMBLEM OF FAITH IN CHRIST.** There was nothing in the act of gazing which itself contributed to the recovery of those who were bitten. Nor is there anything meritorious in the attitude of the soul that exercises faith in the Saviour. But it is an act which brings the soul into closest relation with the all-gracious Redeemer. Faith is an attitude, an inspiration of the soul, which instrumentally secures salvation. The Divine ordinance is this: "Look and live!"

**VI. THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEWS CONCERNING THE SERPENT OF BRASS IS EMBLEMATICAL OF THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.** It was a ministry of benevolence and of blessing which was discharged by those who went through the camp of Israel, heralding deliverance and life. And there are no tidings so honourable to deliver, and so profitable to receive, as the glad tidings of a great Saviour and a great salvation, which it is the office of the Christian preacher to publish to those who are afar off and to those who are near,—I.

**Vers. 16, 17.—"The gift of God."** This is the language either of our Lord himself  
JOHN. I.

or of the evangelist. If these are Christ's words, they contain his authoritative testimony to his own declaration. If they are the words of John, we have in them the inspired judgment of one who was in most intimate fellowship with Jesus, and who was peculiarly competent to represent his Master's work in accordance with that Master's own mind. Familiar as this comprehensive and sublime utterance is to all Christians, there is danger lest it should become trite, lest it should fail to impress our minds with its most amazing import. Obvious as are the several aspects of the central truth of Christianity here presented, it may be well to bring them successively before the mind.

I. THE MOTIVE WHICH PROMPTED THE GIFT. This was love, an emotion which some think too human to attribute to the Ruler of the universe. But we are justified in believing that we ourselves are susceptible of love only because God has fashioned us in his own likeness. Love is distinguishable from goodness as having more of the character of personal interest. And the relations between God and man being considered, love here must be understood as involving pity and also sacrifice. And whereas human love is often intense in proportion to its narrowness and concentration, Divine love is all-embracing—includes all mankind. This, indeed, follows from the origination of this love in the Divine mind. It was nothing in mankind except their need and sin and helplessness which called forth the benevolence of the heart of the heavenly Father.

II. THE PRECIOUSNESS OF THE GIFT. Great love found its expression in a great gift, worthy of the generous and munificent Benefactor of mankind. The use of the appellation, "only begotten Son," seems to point to the estimation in which Christ was held by the Father, in whose view none was to be compared with Christ. It is not easy for us to realize the value set upon Christ by the Father; but we can look at this gift from our own side, and can form some judgment of the worth of the Lord Jesus to our humanity. Because he was the Son of man and the Friend of sinners, and because he was this in his humiliation, and is this in his glory, therefore he is dear and precious to the hearts of those whose nature he deigned to assume, whose lot he deigned to share. He who withholds no good thing from men, withheld not, spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all.

III. THE INTENTION AND PURPOSE WITH WHICH THE GIFT WAS BESTOWED. As here presented, this was twofold. 1. The aim was one of deliverance, to secure men from impending condemnation and perdition. 2. It was also an aim of highest beneficence, viz. to make men partakers of eternal life. By this marvellous and glorious language we must understand, not the mere continuance of existence, but the perpetuity of the highest well-being—that life which truly deserves the name, and which, being Divine, is also imperishable.

IV. THE CONDITION UPON WHICH THE GIFT MAY BE ENJOYED. A moral, spiritual gift cannot be bestowed, as can a material boon, independently of the character and religious position of the beneficiary. The greatest gift of God is conferred, not upon the deserving or upon the fortunate, but upon the believing. Concerning this condition of faith, it should be remarked that it is (1) indispensable upon God's side, for he is honoured by the grateful acceptance of his free and precious gift. And it is further (2) indispensable upon man's side, for the gift must be accepted and appropriated by those for whom it is intended. He who rejects Christ cannot benefit by Christ; it is faith that links the soul to the Saviour.

APPLICATION. The word "whosoever" is here employed in order to point out that, in the Divine compassion there is no limitation, in the Divine offer there is no restriction. There is nothing in the purposes of God, nothing in the condition prescribed by Divine wisdom, which can exclude the meanest or the vilest, if only penitent and believing, from the enjoyment of this incomparable gift.—T.

Ver. 18.—*Faith and judgment.* Man's life is full of alternatives. Choice between different paths that offer themselves, often between two paths, determines the direction and the character of the journey. If it is so in the decision men form as to a profession, an abode, a friendship, etc., is it not also thus with regard to religion, with regard to the principle which shall govern our moral life and decide our lasting destiny? Immediately after propounding one of the fullest and richest statements of the gospel, our Lord reverts to the moral probation which is distinctive of human life, and which is only intensified by the privilege of hearing of and knowing himself. The

question for those thus privileged is—Shall they or shall they not believe on the Son of God?

I. OUR JUDICIAL RELATION TO GOD NECESSARILY INVOLVES ONE OR OTHER OF TWO SENTENCES. Because he has devised and provided the gospel, God does not therefore cease to be a Judge, wise, holy, and just. As such he will pronounce upon all who are subject to his authority a sentence either of (1) condemnation, which is the due of sin and the desert of sinners; or of (2) acquittal, which proceeds from Divine grace, and which is the condition of true well-being. This being the alternative, it is for us a question of supreme moment—Can we in any way affect this sentence?

II. OUR MORAL RELATION TO GOD DETERMINES OUR JUDICIAL RELATION. In other words, his sentence will be according to the attitude, so to speak, of our hearts. It is open to us: 1. *To reject or disbelieve in Christ the Saviour.* The “only begotten Son of God” claims our reverence and our faith. But the language of Jesus makes it evident that we may withhold what he claims; and to neglect and disregard is the same thing as to refuse and despise salvation. Such a choice is falling back upon our own deserts; and to appeal to justice is to court condemnation. Or we may: 2. *Accept or put faith in Christ.* Such a choice is opening the eye of the soul to the light that shines, and welcoming it and walking in it. This is to fall in with the gracious proposals of our heavenly Father, to obey the call to spiritual liberty and life. If it be said that God judges righteously according to the character of those who stand at his tribunal, this is admitted; but it should be observed that faith is the means of forgiveness, and forgiveness is the spring of obedience and of conformity to the mind and will of the All-holy.

III. THE SENTENCE OF ACQUITTAL OR CONDEMNATION IS THEREFORE VIRTUALLY PRONOUNCED BY OURSELVES, AND THAT IN THIS PRESENT LIFE. There is an awful meaning in these words: “He that believeth not hath been judged already.” Condemnation is virtually passed upon the unbelieving, even in this life; and it may be said that it is pronounced by themselves. This doctrine of Christ is in no way inconsistent with the scriptural declaration that there shall be a day in which God shall judge all men by Jesus Christ. But it reminds us of the far-reaching, the eternal influence of our present decision, and bids us “flee from the wrath to come.”—T.

Ver. 19.—*Lovers of darkness.* Our Lord’s discourse to Nicodemus was mainly of redemption and regeneration, and was therefore bright and hopeful. Yet he was constrained, in faithfulness and candour, to speak also of condemnation. The prospect before mankind was not one of unclouded glory. The prevalence of sin and the alienation of man from God were a cloud upon the horizon which obscured the brightness even of the gospel day.

I. THE ADVENT OF LIGHT. In the spiritual world light is the emblem of knowledge. Christ is designated by the evangelist “the true Light;” he calls himself “the Light of the world.” He brings the knowledge of God, and consequently of salvation and of eternal life. This spiritual sunrise involves the diffusion of purity, peace, and joy.

II. THE PREFERENCE OF SOME MEN FOR DARKNESS OVER LIGHT. In itself light is best. “Light is good, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” Those who live and walk in the light of God are spiritually blessed. If any person rejects and loathes the light, the fault is in the eye of the soul, which is manifestly diseased. The captive may prefer the dungeon to liberty. Of many of the Jews—Christ’s own countrymen—it was justly said, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” And even now, when the gospel is preached, and men are invited to come into the sunshine of God’s favour, there are found those who prefer to lurk in the dark caves of ignorance, superstition, and sin.

III. THEIR REASON OR MOTIVE FOR THIS PREFERENCE. Our Lord speaks explicitly and powerfully upon this. His doctrine, his religion, *condemns sin*; his gospel is good tidings of deliverance from sin. His own hatred to sin was such that he was crucified by sinners who could not endure his purity, whilst he endured crucifixion that he might redeem men from the power and love of sin. Hence Christ’s society was distasteful to impenitent sinners when he was upon earth, and his gospel is distasteful, is repugnant, to the same class to-day. Those whose works are evil will not come to

the light, for thus their evil works would be exhibited in their monstrous heinousness, and they themselves would be reprov'd.

**IV. THE JUDGMENT THUS INCURRED.** 1. The *ground* of judgment is here plainly stated; it is not so much for sin, as for that content and delight in sin, which leads to the rejection of the gospel, to the refusal of deliverance from sin, to the hatred of that Saviour who came to vanquish sin. 2. The *court* of judgment is implied. The lovers of darkness are condemned by their own conscience, whose dictates they disregard in order to follow the impulses of passion. Yet it is Christ himself, the Word of God, who speaks in human nature, and utters the sentence of disapproval and of condemnation. Thus it is that Christ is to all men either their Saviour or their Judge. His coming to this earth was the *cause* only of salvation, but to many it was the *occasion* of judgment and of confusion.—T.

**Ver. 34.—Unmeasured gifts.** If this passage describes the fulness of spiritual gifts and powers bestowed by God upon the Lord Jesus, then there is here implicit or explicit mention of the Three Persons of the Trinity. Impossible though it is for the finite intellect thoroughly to understand the statement, Christians receive it in faith, and believe that the Father bestows the Spirit upon the Son, and that in unstinted liberality.

**I. A CONTRAST IS HERE IMPLIED BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE PROPHETS.** 1. The immediate suggestion seems to be the language in which John the Baptist acknowledged the superiority of the Messiah, whose herald and forerunner he was appointed to be. John was inspired in such measure as was requisite in order to the accomplishment of his mission. But the compass of his revelation was limited, and, powerful as was his preaching, it was of necessity human, and by its very aim one-sided. The inspiration of Christ was very different; for his ministry was Divine and perfect, and needed qualifications altogether transcending those which sufficed for his forerunner. 2. The same was the case with the earlier prophets of the older dispensation. They could, indeed, truly preface their prophecies with the declaration, "The Spirit of the Lord was upon me." But they were commissioned for a purpose, and they were inspired accordingly; and when they foretold the advent of the Messiah, they foretold that that advent should be accompanied by a Divine effusion of blessing—a very flood of spiritual energy and life. And they, as well as John, testified beforehand of the higher gifts of him who should come.

**II. REASONS ARE APPARENT FOR THE BESTOWAL OF THE SPIRIT IN UNLIMITED MEASURE UPON THE CHRIST.** 1. The Lord Jesus was, by virtue of his Divine nature, capable of receiving the Spirit in a larger degree than all who went before him, than all who followed him. 2. The Father's approval and love of the Son were unlimited; for Christ did always those things that pleased the Father, and the Father declared himself to be well pleased with him. 3. Inasmuch as the Father sent his Son upon a mission altogether unique, one requiring most peculiar qualifications, it was evidently necessary that there should be a corresponding impartation of spiritual power, that the work might be not only performed, but performed in a manner wanting in no respect. The greatest of all works needed the greatest of all gifts.

**III. THERE WERE PROOFS IN OUR LORD'S CHARACTER AND MINISTRY THAT HE POSSESSED AN INEXHAUSTIBLE SUPPLY OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.** The whole of the Gospels might be quoted in support of this assertion. Upon Christ rested the Spirit, as the Spirit of *wisdom*, of *power*, and of *love*. His discourses, his mighty works, his demeanour under suffering and wrong, his willing death, his glorious exaltation,—all evinced the presence and indwelling of the immortal power that pervades and hallows to highest ends the spiritual universe of God.

**IV. THE UNIQUE OUTPOURING OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT UPON OUR LORD ACCOUNTS FOR THE UNIQUE RESULTS WHICH FOLLOWED HIS MISSION TO EARTH.** Thus: 1. Christ's ministry was perfectly acceptable to the Father, who both commissioned and qualified him to become the Mediator. 2. The perfect efficiency of this wonderful ministry was thus secured. 3. The glorious results of Christ's coming into the world were thus accounted for. Why did the Pentecostal effusion, and the subsequent dispensation of the Holy Ghost, follow the exaltation of the Mediator to the throne of dominion? Evidently because in Christ the Spirit overflowed from himself to his

people, and to the race for whom he died; because he "received gifts for men." Himself participating in unlimited supply in the graces of the Holy Spirit, he became the glorious agent through whom copious blessings were conferred upon the Church and upon the world. He received, not for himself merely, but for us also. The gifts were *unto* him, but they were *for* us.—T.

**Ver. 16.—The greatness of God's love to the world.** This will be seen if we consider—

**I. THE OBJECT OF HIS LOVE.** "The world"—the fallen human family. 1. *There was nothing in the world to attract and deserve his love.* For he loved the world, not as he made it, but as it made itself by sin. God loves all holy beings. This is natural, as natural as it is for a virtuous father to love a dutiful son. But God loved the world in its disobedience and sin. It was the magnitude and gravitation of his love, and not the attraction of the world. 2. *There was much in the world to repel his love.* Not only it was not attractive, but it was most repelling. Its fall was deliberate and wilful, and it was indifferent, and even rebellious in its fallen state. The magnitude of any force is measured by the opposing forces it conquers. In this light, how great must be the love of God to the world! He conquered the mightiest oppositions—the sin, the disobedience, the bitterest enmity, and the cruellest antagonism of the world. He loved the world in spite of itself. 3. *The world deserved punishment—perdition.* This punishment was hanging over it. Justice called and demanded vengeance, but mercy triumphed over judgment, took justice into its confidence, made a treaty with it, and became responsible for all its heavy claims. What must be the greatness of the love that did this! 4. *He loved the whole world.* Not a part of it, or a few of its inhabitants, but all alike, and altogether. He might have made a selection, but the selection of Divine love was the whole world. This reveals it as a boundless and fathomless ocean, inexhaustible in its riches, and infinite in its kind impulses. The arms of his love are so everlasting that they took hold of the fallen world and fondled it in their safe and warm embrace.

**II. THE GIFT OF HIS LOVE.** Love is measured by the gifts it presents and the sacrifice it makes. In this light, how great is God's love to the world! 1. *He gave his Son.* Think of him as a mere Son—good, dutiful, and holy. How great is the gift! To give a holy being, such as an angel, would be a great gift and a manifestation of great love; but he gave his Son. 2. *He gave his only begotten Son.* To give one son out of many would be a manifestation of great love; but he gave his only Son, and his only begotten Son—his equal—who was one with him in essence, mind, and heart; the Son of his love, who was ever with him and ever his delight. Such a gift he never gave before, and can never give again. The gift is royal and matchless, the sacrifice is Divine and unique—an index of love too high, too broad, too deep, too Divine for mortals to comprehend. 3. *He gave his only begotten Son as a sacrifice.* To send his Son would be a manifestation of great love, but to give him is a manifestation of a far greater; for he sent his Son to the world as a Messenger of peace, but he gave him as a Sacrifice for the world's sin. Divine love in the Incarnation appears like a brilliant star, like that star the "wise men" saw in the east; but in the Crucifixion, with all its indignities and agonies, it appears like a sun all ablaze, and filling the universe with its matchless radiance. On Calvary God's love is on fire, and the flames envelop the world, and even the throne of glory; so that in view of this, how natural is the exclamation of the evangelist elsewhere. "God is love"! When we gaze upon it in sacrifice, we are completely dazzled, so that we can see nothing but love Divine and infinite.

**III. THE PURPOSE OF HIS LOVE.** This is twofold. 1. *To save the human race from the greatest calamity.* "Should not perish." (1) *Their perdition was inevitable without God's interference.* If the Law were left to take its course, its transgressors would be summarily punished; they were already in the hands of justice, and the verdict was "perdition." (2) *God was under no obligation to interfere.* He fully performed his part of the covenant, and surrounded man with all the possibilities and advantages of an obedient and consequently a happy life; but man wilfully neglected his own part, and transgressed the Law of his Creator, and brought upon himself his awful but righteous doom; and there was no stipulation as to mercy, so there was no obligation on the part of God to intercede. (3) *God was under no necessity to interfere.*

In the exercise of his matchless love in Christ, he was absolutely free and independent, for the world to him is as the small dust of the balance, and its inhabitants as mere grasshoppers. He would be eternally glorious and happy if the guilty world were left to its horrible fate. Consequently, his love is as pure and unselfish as it is glorious and infinite; for what but the most unselfish and intense love could prompt him to hold this guilty world in his arms, and prevent it from falling over the awful precipice? 2. *To bring within the reach of all the greatest good.* "But have eternal life." (1) That man may enjoy *the greatest good*. "Life." Every life is good in itself and very precious; but this life is the highest and best of all; it is spiritual life—the life of God in the soul, and represents all good and happiness which the soul needs and is capable of enjoying. (2) That man may enjoy *the greatest good for ever*. "Eternal life"—endless good and happiness. To save the guilty world from perdition manifests great love; but Divine love shines more brilliantly still, when, at the greatest possible sacrifice, not merely saves the world from the greatest calamity, but brings within its reach the greatest good, "eternal life."

IV. THE CONDITION ON WHICH THE BLESSINGS OF HIS LOVE MAY BE OBTAINED. There are many good human measures, offering great advantages, but containing disadvantageous clauses, which debar most from the benefit. But throughout the great scheme of redemption, God's love shines with steady and ever-increasing brilliancy. Even in the condition on which its blessings are offered, simple faith in Christ—"whosoever believeth in him." 1. *This condition is essential.* The blessings offered could not be received; appropriated effectively, without faith, which means trustful and hearty reception. "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" and it is quite as impossible without it to save and bless man. 2. *This condition is reasonable.* Is it not reasonable that those who stand in need of salvation should believe and trust their Saviour? Are not the faith and trust demanded by Divine love continually exercised in the affairs of our daily life, as conditions of temporal well-being? Reason is on the side of faith and against unbelief. 3. *The condition is easy.* Divine love could not fix upon an easier condition. A higher condition doubtless could be demanded; but such is the greatness of Divine love, and the intensity of the Divine will that all should avoid perdition and obtain eternal life, that they are offered on the easiest condition possible—simple faith, simple trust, and a grateful acceptance of the benefit. This condition is in the power of all; and in view of what God has done through Christ, one would think that it is easier far to believe than not. 4. *The same condition is for all, and all partake of the benefit on the same condition.* "Whosoever believeth," etc. There is no distinction of any kind, no partiality, no limit. He might make a distinction—he had perfect right; but such is the infinitude of his love that he makes none, no distinction, no limit; he leaves this to man himself, but not without every effort of Divine love to direct his conduct and guide his choice.

LESSONS. 1. *The tale of God's love is most eloquently told by its own deeds.* If it be asked how much God loved the world, the simple answer is, "God so loved the world that he gave," etc. The gift and sacrifice of love answer with Divine and ever-increasing eloquence. 2. *Man's ruin is entirely of himself; his salvation is entirely of God.* The simple progeny of his grace, the pure offspring of his love. 3. *It is far easier now for man to enter life than fall into perdition.* For between him and perdition there are Divine barriers—God's love, in the agonies of suffering and the eloquence of sacrifice, warning and beseeching him. Between him and life there is nothing but his own unbelief. 4. *If anything can bring man to repentance and faith, it is the love of God in the sacrifice of his Son.* If this cannot, nothing can. 5. *Nothing can show the moral resisting power and perversity of man as much as his going to perdition in spite of God's love in Christ.* What power of madness! What a terrible fall—to fall to perdition over the infinite love of God!—B. T.

Ver. 17.—*The great purpose of God in the mission of his Son.* Consider it—

I. IN ITS NEGATIVE ASPECT. "For God sent not his Son," etc. This implies: 1. *That God might have sent him for purposes of judgment.* (1) *The world amply deserved this.* The Jewish world had abused its great and special privileges, and the heathen world had not lived up to the light it possessed, and had become guilty and abominably wicked. Hypocrisy, infidelity, and vice were rampant. (2) *This would be strictly just.*

If the Son were sent to condemn and destroy the world, the ends of justice would be strictly answered; for even the Jewish world was disimproving under the preliminary dispensation of mercy, and loudly called for judgment. (3) *The world expected and feared this.* The world, being guilty naturally, expected and feared punishment. It was suspicious of any communication from the other side. It feared that it might be a message of vengeance. It was so in Eden, and throughout the old dispensation and at the beginning of the new. Friendly angels were suspected of being the executors of justice, and even the Messiah himself was expected to appear as a Judge. 2. *God did not do what he might have justly done.* "For God sent not," etc. (1) *He had a sufficient reason for this.* The reason doubtless was the gracious purpose of his love. (2) *The world is ignorant and guilty and selfish,* so as to be blind to the gracious purposes and the merciful movements of Jehovah. The pure in heart can only see him. (3) *God moves in an infinitely higher groove than man.* Therefore man's surmises and anticipations of the Divine purposes are often false. He is better than we think, and more gracious than we expect. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways," etc. 3. *Much of God's goodness to the world consists in not doing what he might justly and easily do.* (1) This is seen in nature. In thousands of instances we see how mighty forces would be destructive if not checked by the laws of nature, which are but the almighty and gracious and ever-present energy of the Divine will. (2) This is seen in providence, as illustrated in the recorded dealings of God towards his people, as well as in the experience of all who seriously think and reflect in every age. "He has not dealt with us after our sins," etc. (3) This is especially seen in redemption. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world," etc. Although the world deserved this, God might have sent his Son for the purpose of judgment, but in his goodness he averted the calamity. He sent him not for this purpose.

II. IN ITS AFFIRMATIVE ASPECT. "But that the world through him might be saved."

1. *The gracious purpose of God in Christ is salvation.* (1) This is suggested by the fact of the Incarnation. God might have sent his Son into the world to judge it, to punish it. He had a perfect right to do this, but it is not likely that he would do it. The Incarnation does not seem essential to judge and punish. He could do this without it. The fact suggests that the Divine purpose was not vengeance, but salvation; not judgment, but mercy. (2) This is proved by the mission of the Son in the world. It was "peace on earth, and good will to men." He appeared not with the sword of vengeance, but with the golden sceptre of mercy; and rather than kill any one physically or morally, he voluntarily submitted to be killed himself, and from death offered life to the world, even to his cruellest foes. (3) This is proved by the effects of his mission in the world. The effects were not destruction, but reformation; not death, but life; not vengeance, but salvation. His ministry and Divine energy healed multitudes physically and spiritually. He cheered, quickened, and saved them. 2. *The purpose of God is the salvation of the world, and the whole world.* "That the world should be saved." His purpose is as gracious and universal as his love. It embraces the world. Without any distinction of nationality, race, character, education, or position, the purpose is worthy of God as a Divine Philanthropist. 3. *The purpose of God is the salvation of the world through the Son.* "That the world through him," etc. (1) He is the *Medium of salvation*, the great Agent and Author of eternal salvation. Through him the world was created, is supported, and through him it will be saved. What he has done and is doing has made the salvation of the world possible, and through him already the world is potentially saved. (2) He is the *only Medium of salvation*. He is the only Saviour. There is no other, and no other would do. If some one else would suffice, the Son would not be sent. The world could be condemned and destroyed through other means, but could be saved through the Son alone. (3) He is an *all-efficient Medium of salvation*. The Divine purpose of salvation, in its self-sacrificing love, its greatness, universality, its difficulties, found in him an efficient Medium. He is equal to the task. He has authority to save: God sent him. He is mighty to save: the Son of God. An almighty Saviour by nature, by birth, by Name, by experience, and by ample proofs and Divine and human testimonials, he intends to save; he was sent for that purpose, and his purpose and love are one with those of God who sent him. 4. *The gracious purpose of God to save the world through the Son*



*makes its salvation very hopeful.* "For God sent not," etc. In view of this, in spite of the world's sin and terrible unbelief, we see infinite possibilities of its salvation. It is now a glorious possibility. Shall it become a practical fact? This is the Divine purpose. Shall it fail? God has answered, it shall not fail on his part. Let the world answer.

**CONCLUSION.** 1. *What God did to the world was infinitely more difficult than what he might have done.* He could easily punish it, but to save it cost him infinite sacrifice. 2. *What he did, when contrasted with what he might have done, stands forth as a brilliant illustration of his grace and a monument of his love.* 3. *What he did will be a greater condemnation of the impenitent world than what he might have done.* It has placed the world under obligations and responsibilities which neither time nor eternity can obliterate. The punishment of love will be more severe than the punishment of justice. 4. *What he did will bring greater glory to his Name.* He will be infinitely more glorious in the anthems of a saved world than he would have been in the wails of a lost one.—B. T.

Vers. 25—30.—*The Bridegroom's friend true to the last.* Notice—

**I. THE DISCIPLES' COMPLAINT.** It is the embodiment of a blind and angry zeal. And as such: 1. *It is ever disparaging in its language.* "He that was with thee beyond Jordan." They address their own master as "Rabbi," but speak of Jesus as "he that was," etc., as if he had no name; and, if he had, it was not worth mentioning compared with their master's. The memory of angry zeal is very short, and its respect for supposed opponents or rivals is shorter still. 2. *It is ever contradictory in its language.* "To whom thou hast borne witness." This part of their complaint contradicts the whole; for, had they reflected a little, they would find that the present actions of Jesus were in perfect harmony with John's past testimony. Blind zeal is ever contradictory, contradicting truth, God, the ministry, and even itself. 3. *It is ever inaccurate in its language.* "Behold, the same baptizeth." This was virtually true, but literally false. It was a hearsay mistake of the Pharisees, which the evangelist had to correct. Neither cruel opposition nor angry zeal is over-careful about the niceties of truth and accuracy of statement. To hear a thing is quite enough for its purpose. 4. *It is ever exaggerating in its language.* "And all men come to him." Would this were true! He invited all, and they ought to come. Doubtless Jesus was more popular now than John. The popular flow was towards him; but that all men came to him was an exaggeration, as proved by the evangelist's statement, "And no man receiveth his testimony." Jealous zeal is ever exaggerating. It sees a crowd in a few, and sometimes only a few in a large crowd. There is a vast difference between its reports and those of calm and unbiased truth. 5. *It is ever calculated to do much harm.* It was calculated, in this instance, to prejudice John against Jesus, and create in his breast a spirit of jealousy and rivalry, especially if we consider the plausibility of the complaint. (1) *It is expressed in a plausible language and manner.* He to whom thou barest witness has set up in opposition against thee. Behold, he baptizeth in the very place where thou used to baptize; and this, after all, is his treatment to thee for thy favour and friendship. (2) *It is made by warm friends.* His old disciples, in an enthusiastic and kind spirit and from good motives. And this will go very far to influence most teachers. (3) *It is made in a very critical period.* John's position was altogether unique and mysterious. His popularity was now on the wane, and he was but a man. And such a complaint made at such a period was calculated strongly to tempt him to doubt and melancholy, if not to a spirit of rivalry and jealousy. And what an incalculable harm would this be! It would be a source of joy to infidelity and atheism through ages, and most damaging to the gospel, if its first great herald gave way in the hour of temptation, proved unworthy of his mission, and unfaithful to his trust.

**II. JOHN'S TRIUMPHANT DEFENCE.** He stood firm as a rock and majestically calm in the sudden and sweeping storm. His character as the forerunner of the Messiah never shone more brightly than on this occasion, and, being his last public testimony to Jesus, it reaches a glorious climax and a grand peroration. His defence reveals: 1. *The spirituality of his private conceptions.* (1) He looks at heaven as the source of spiritual gifts. "A man can receive nothing," etc. This is the starting-point of his noble defence. Before the breath of jealousy, the suggestions of rivalry, and the storms of

strife, he goes up at once into his native air, the birthplace of his mission, the nursery of good and holy thoughts, and the source of spiritual power and influence. (2) He looks at heaven as *the only source of spiritual gifts*. "A man can receive nothing," etc. You may get the same kind of article in different warehouses; but spiritual power is the gift of God, and of him alone. Divine commissions are issued only from the Divine throne, and spiritual endowments come only from on high; so that neither John nor Jesus could exercise any spiritual power but what he had received. (3) From this standpoint *all is harmonious*. There is no room for pride or dejection, and the jealous complaint of the disciples is entirely swept away. John and Jesus were exactly what Heaven made them—John the herald and Jesus the coming Messiah. All things which proceed from heaven are harmonious; and if we want to see them in their harmony and beauty we must view them from above. If we wish to rise above the mists and storms of party jealousy and rivalry, we must ascend into the home of love, peace, and order, and look at things in the light of heaven. From this altitude there can be no rivalry between John and Jesus. All Divine agencies are harmonious. There can be no jealousy between the morning star and the blazing sun. Had John remained down, and viewed things from his disciples' standpoint, he would see and feel as they did. But, like an eagle, he flew up to the vicinity of the sun, the central light of the kingdom of heaven, and all was harmony.

2. *The consistency of his public testimony with regard to the Messiah and himself.* (1) *As to what he was not.* "I am not the Christ." Such were the character, the popularity, and the circumstances of John that he was naturally suspected of being the Messiah. Consequently, much of his testimony was negative, and with all his might he iterated and reiterated, "I am not the Christ," etc. (2) *As to what he was.* His forerunner. "I am sent before him." Twice he directly pointed him out, but as a rule he spoke of him in general, but characteristic, terms, that they might know him rather by his character and deeds. (3) *As to the evidence of his consistency.* Such was the consistency of his testimony to the Messiah that he could most confidently appeal to his disciples, and even to the complaining ones, "Ye yourselves bear me witness," etc. "Even in your jealous complaint you bear me witness." The invariable uniformity of his testimony to Christ made him now strong in the hour of trial. One wrong step or wrong expression may lead to another. All the links make up the chain. One weak link affects the whole. It is a great source of strength to the preacher if he can summon his audience to bear witness to the consistency of his ministry. One part of life affects the other. John in the wilderness was a great help to John at Ænon. If we wish our public testimony to be consistent, let our private conceptions be spiritual and heavenly.

3. *The reasons of his continued attachment.* (1) *The relationship of Christ to believers.* He is the Bridegroom; they are the bride. As such, the bride is his; "For he that hath the bride is the Bridegroom," and no one else. His claims are absolute, sacred, and indisputable. The bride is his. (2) *His own relationship to Christ.* His friend. "The friend of the Bridegroom." As such, his duty was to set forth his excellences so as to win the heart of the bride. The Bridegroom was partly a stranger. He required a friend to introduce him. Such he found in John. He realized his position and duties. By his own superiority, and the plausible, but evil, suggestions of his disciples, he was tempted to take the place of the Bridegroom and win the bride's affections for himself; but he felt that in this he would not be a friend, but the meanest foe. He realized his relationship to Christ, and performed its obligations with increasing firmness and happiness. He had no higher ambition than to be the Bridegroom's friend.

4. *The sources of his joy.* "Rejoiceth greatly," and why? (1) *At a fuller recognition of Jesus.* Before there was expectation, and therefore anxiety and doubt; but these are gone. He hears his voice—the first notes of his public ministry. He recognized him before by appearance, and pointed to him as the "Lamb of God;" but now recognizes him by his voice, and his voice filled the land with Divine music and his soul with ecstatic joy. (2) *At Jesus' success.* His success in winning the affections of the bride. The joy of having won the bride is the Bridegroom's, but his friend, standing by and hearing, shares it. The voice of the Bridegroom with the bride is joyous—the joy of mutual satisfaction and delight. There is no joy to be compared with that of triumphant and ardent love. Christian joy is common and contagious. The success of the Master produces joy in all the disciples. At the marriage of the Lamb all the good wish him joy, and are joyous

with him, especially his friends and forerunners. Jesus is introduced to the soul; but a long time of anxiety often elapses between the introduction and success. When the success comes, what a joy! (3) *At the fulfilment of his own mission.* When he heard the voice of the Bridegroom he heard the first victorious notes of his own mission; for his mission was to bring the Bridegroom and the bride together, and prepare for the Lord a ready people. He rejoiced that the great One he had heralded had come. He was often anxious and hesitating, but now joyous. If we herald Christ's coming faithfully, there will be no disappointment on his part; and, when come, every expectation will be more than filled and every want more than satisfied. John was joyous because his mission was fulfilled. The match was made between the King's Son and the captive daughter of Zion—between heaven and earth, between Jesus and believing souls; and it was a very happy one on both sides. The Bridegroom said of the bride, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters," and the bride said of him, "Thou art the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily," etc.; and the bridegroom's friend, standing by, heareth, and rejoiceth greatly. What was intended to fill him with jealousy filled him with joy, and, being filled with holy joy, he had no room for anything else. 5. *His thorough self-renunciation.* "He must increase," etc. (1) The necessity of this is *recognized*. John saw the "must" of the case. It was becoming and necessary—the natural course of things. He must increase personally, officially, representatively, and dispensationally. He must increase in his influence in the hearts of humanity, in the institutions of the world, and in the songs of the redeemed. And John must decrease officially. He had introduced the Bridegroom to the bride and the bride to the Bridegroom, and his work was at an end. (2) The necessity of this is *willingly recognized*. "He must," etc. It is one thing to see the necessity of an event, it is another to submit to it willingly. John not only saw the necessity and recognized the law of increase as the lot of Jesus and of decrease as his, but accepted its fiat even with joy and delight. It is not only the logic of his head, but the language of his heart. "I am willing; I am glad. Let him ascend and shine; I joyously disappear that he may be manifested." A noble self-sacrifice of the friend, and a befitting introduction to the even nobler one of the Bridegroom.

LESSONS. 1. *Every true minister is a forerunner of Christ, preparing souls to receive him.* When Christ enters the soul by faith, the office of the forerunner is, to a great extent, at an end. 2. *Ministers should not go between Jesus and believers.* The friend of the Bridegroom should not attempt to take his place in the esteem and affections of the bride. This is the essence of the great apostasy. The friend should act as a friend all through, and nothing more. 3. *There should be no jealousy or rivalry between the disciple and the Master, nor between any of the disciples themselves.* Their interests are identical, and their duty is to elevate Christ and bring humanity into living fellowship with him. 4. *Ministers should avoid the temptations of declining years, waning popularity, and jealousy of a popular contemporary.* All this should be kept down by a spirit absorbed in the sacred mission. Many can act on the stage with better grace than they can leave it. The last notes are often out of harmony with the tune of life. Let the end be a sunset like that of John, beautiful and glowing—a convincing proof of an earnest and a sincere life.—B. T.

Vers. 1, 2.—*Coming to Jesus by night.* I. THE SIMPLE FACT IS STATED. We are left to draw our own inferences. Evidently we are meant to think the worse of Nicodemus for coming by night, and we may draw inferences without making Nicodemus out to be an exceptionally bad character. Just the average man of the world, with a position made for him, having much to lose by taking up boldly with new ways, and therefore feeling he could not be too cautious in his first approach to Jesus. He did not want to be compromised.

II. JESUS DID NOT SEND AWAY THE MAN WHO CAME BY NIGHT. He did not stand upon his dignity. He did not say, "Go away again, and come by daylight." Jesus is the most accessible of beings. It is better to come by day than by night, because such a coming indicates a brave, determined mind, bent on getting at the truth, and so much the better placed for reaching the truth, because it has risen above that fear of man which bringeth a snare. But it is better to come by night than not at all; and it matters a great deal to us to know that Jesus did not send this man away because

he came by night. Thus we have illustration how Jesus does not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. If weak ones are to make headway in the path of faith and righteousness, they must not be dealt with hardly in the beginning.

III. JESUS HAS THE SAME MESSAGE WHENEVER WE MAY COME. Whatever hour Nicodemus may choose, it is the same truth he will have to hear, the same process he will have to go through. Come at midnight or come at noonday, the announcement is the same, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

IV. CONTRAST THE COMING OF NICODEMUS WITH HIS DEPARTURE. Not that we are *told* how he departed. He may have succeeded in his immediate desire. His visit to Jesus may have remained unknown to everybody but Jesus and himself. He came in the darkness of physical night, and in the darkness of physical night he probably went away. But nevertheless, uncomfortable consequences must have come to him in ways he did not at all expect. He came in the gross darkness of spiritual ignorance, but he can hardly have gone away without some dim rays of spiritual light upon his path. There must, at all events, have been a disturbing sense of a larger world than he had been heretofore accustomed to. He had been brought face to face with more searching views of life. You may, perhaps, choose what you will begin and how, but how you will end is beyond your choice. The one thing that everybody now knows about Nicodemus is that he is the man who came to Jesus by night. What a commentary on the vain wisdom and expectations of men! The very means Nicodemus takes to ensure secrecy end in the widest publicity. And yet it is a publicity that does not hurt Nicodemus, and it is for the world's good. It is long, long ago since it could matter in the least to Nicodemus who knew the way of his coming to Jesus.—Y.

Vers. 2, 3.—*Jesus humbling vaunted knowledge.* I. THE VAUNTED KNOWLEDGE OF NICODEMUS. Nicodemus wants to come to Jesus with safety to his own position, and he gets over the difficulty, as he thinks, by coming at night. But such a proceeding may produce greater difficulties than it removes. Now he has come, what shall he say? His aim is to sound Jesus a little, and find out if it will be politic to encourage him. We may be tolerably sure that, with such aims, Jesus would not make his task the easier. Imagine Nicodemus, after going through the usual salutations and beginnings of conversation, making his way to the business that has brought him. How, then, *ought he to have begun?* Surely something after this fashion: "You will think it a strange thing for me to come under cover of the dark, but you must know that I am a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews, and so I cannot come just at any hour I please. Coming in the daylight, my coming would get known, and all the good things I have worked so hard to gain would speedily vanish. So, before I risk them, I want to know a little more about you." But instead of beginning with simple truth, he says the very thing he ought not to have said—the very thing which was in plain contradiction to the way of his coming. He says he knows Jesus has come from God, and these Pharisees, one and all of them, were professed servants of God, ostentatious even in their service. If, then, Nicodemus had really believed Jesus to have come from God, would he have sought conference with him in this ignominious fashion? Nicodemus feared men more than he feared God. He really knows nothing at all about God. As yet he is a mere player with words instead of an earnest dealer in deep realities. Talking about words and names must not be confounded with real searching into things. Nicodemus should have gone to Jesus, saying, "Thou doer of marvels, whence hast thou come? what hast thou brought? what dost thou ask for?"

II. THE WAY TO TRUE KNOWLEDGE. Nicodemus must have his mind cleared of cant and illusion and empty tradition. Jesus does this at once by one of those fundamental declarations going down to the heart of human need. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Thus an indication is given as to the sort of people who profit by the teaching of Jesus. Nicodemus is right in calling Jesus a Teacher; but, then, he can only teach certain people. Jesus, who came to establish a *spiritual* kingdom of God, can as yet do nothing for Nicodemus, whose notions of a kingdom are of something having a power and splendour to be perceived by the bodily eye. Both Jesus and Nicodemus can talk about the kingdom of God, but they mean very different things. Jesus knows well what the Pharisee has come for. He suspects that Jesus, unlikely as he looks, may be a great one in the expected kingdom, and if so

Nicodemus may get the first chance of a good position. So the heart of the man must be altogether altered before he can listen sympathetically to the teaching of Jesus.—Y.

**Ver. 5.—“Born of water and of the Spirit.”** I. OBSERVE THE TRUE TEACHER. This verse is in answer to a question. The first word of Jesus to Nicodemus is a word that brings a question. The true teacher seeks to provoke activity of mind and curiosity in the learner. The question is certainly a most absurd one, but Nicodemus had no time to prepare a sensible one. It is easy for us to be wise over the introductory declaration of Jesus, because we look at it with plenty of illustrations and explanations shining upon it. But Nicodemus, in all his previous thinking, had nothing to make him expect Jesus would thus speak; and so it is little wonder to find him staggered, confused, utterly bewildered, to hear Jesus speaking thus calmly of such a wondrous experience. The question, however absurd, leads on to a piece of most practical information.

II. THE FURTHER EXPLANATION OF JESUS. We are not likely to suppose that being born again means to live natural life over again. Few would care for that, travelling over the old road, meeting the old difficulties, fighting the old battles. Jesus explains that to be born again is to be born of water and of the Spirit. Being born of water means, of course, passing through the experience of repentance. The true disciple of John the Baptist was born of water. He repented, changed from his old view of life, manifested that changed view by changed habits and practices, and, for sign of all this, was baptized with water. Nicodemus evidently had this experience still to go through. He had not been a disciple of John the Baptist. He had yet to see what a poor shallow affair an outward kingdom is. But being born of water takes us only a small way into the regeneration. You must follow up discipleship of John with discipleship of Jesus. You may cease to care for the old, and yet not have found your way to possession of the new. The only new creature worth calling such is the new creature in Christ Jesus. You must feel on your heart the breath of him who has eternal life. By repentance, old things pass away; by spiritual birth, all things become new. The spiritual man looks on a virtually new world. The precious becomes worthless, and the worthless precious; the once neglected is sought for, and the once sought for is neglected.—Y.

**Vers. 14, 15.—The lifting up of the Son of man.** These are probably the closing words of Jesus to Nicodemus. Jesus has had to teach him great spiritual truths from the analogies of natural birth and the wind blowing where it listeth. Now he will conclude with an historical parallel.

I. AN HONOURED NAME IS MENTIONED. Nicodemus and his sect professed to glorify Moses. Jesus did glorify him in reality. Perhaps Nicodemus is beginning to think that, after all, there is nothing in Jesus likely to be of much service, no correspondence between outward appearance and desired results. And now he is made to understand that Jesus is well acquainted with all the proceedings of Moses, and can use them just when they are wanted. Moses is not only giver of laws, prescriber of ceremonies, fountain of honoured traditions; he is also a saviour, and a saviour by methods that to the natural eye look to have no salvation in them.

II. A PRESSING NEED IS SUGGESTED. There must be deliverance from destruction. Something had to be done for the bitten, dying children of Israel, and God gave Moses instructions according to his own wisdom. Other means might have been employed, but those means actually were employed which served the largest ends. Why Moses had to raise the brazen serpent is not seen till Jesus is lifted on the cross. Then we understand how God has his eye on perishing individuals still. Nicodemus is not yet bitten of a guilty conscience. His aims are earthly and limited. He wants something for his own temporal advantage—something ministering to his pride as a Jew. And now Jesus hints to Nicodemus how he must discover his spiritual danger, if he is to get the full blessing from Jesus. Jesus is a Saviour as well as a Teacher. He would have men learn first their need of salvation, and then, being saved, they will go on to learn from him how best to use the life that has been saved.

III. THE DEMAND FOR SIMPLE FAITH. Such a demand must not be left out of such a discourse. There are many things Jesus cannot yet explain to Nicodemus. Even were Nicodemus a spiritual man, he would have to wait while Jesus goes on through all

the transactions of his great work. How mysterious the announcement of the lifting up of Jesus would seem when it was first made! But Jesus, we may be sure, made that announcement with a view to all in future ages who should read of his lifting up on the cross. Nicodemus might not come again, so Jesus sends him away with as much of essential truth as possible. Let us, too, be deeply thankful for the parallel Jesus draws between the brazen serpent and himself. It makes us see the power residing in simple faith when that faith goes out to an object of God's own appointment.—Y.

**Ver. 16.—*The love of God in deed and truth.*** Here the producing cause of the gospel is briefly stated—why men need it, and why God sends it. How God regards the world and what he would do for it are here set before us.

**I. THE WORLD IS A PERISHING WORLD.** If those believing in the Son of God will not perish, the conclusion is plain that those who remain unbelieving in Christ will perish. The word might have been, "God so loved the world as to fill it with all manner of things pleasant to eye and ear and taste, comforts various and numberless for the temporal life of man." But the awful word "perish" is brought in, and so we are forced to think, first of all, not of comforts and blessings, but of perils. Drop the word "perish" out of the text, and the profit of all the rest is gone. The world is a perishing world, and we are perishing in the midst of it. The assumption that man is a perishing being without Christ underlies every page of the Scriptures, and is implied in every doctrine of the gospel. The very fact that there is a gospel is the very proof that the gospel is needed. None but he who made us can have an adequate sense of the ruin of our nature through sin. Only he knows all the glory and perfection of which we are capable without sin; only he can estimate the corresponding shame and corruption when sin has gotten the mastery. God only knows all we can enjoy, all we can suffer.

**II. THE FEELING OF OUR DANGER NEEDS TO BE PRODUCED AND INTENSIFIED IN US.** It gets hidden from our eyes by present comforts and enjoyment. And God knows how indifferent we are, how we trifle with the danger, and style those who would impress us with it fanatical and impertinent. And so we need God's grace opening our eyes to spiritual danger as well as offering to us spiritual salvation. The feeling of danger will never come of itself. The danger is a spiritual one, and hence only as the Spirit of God takes hold of us shall we feel how real and great the danger is. There will be no fear of our failing to see the danger when once the Holy Spirit gets full control in our life. We are ever to remember that part of his work is pressing home upon us our need of salvation and our debt to a Saviour.

**III. THE DANGER SEEN, THE SAVIOUR WILL BE WELCOMED.** We cannot look to one another for salvation. The perishing cannot help the perishing. We need a Saviour who does not need to be saved himself. It is a grand thing to point, not to a feeble, uncertain earthly friend, but to a heavenly one. When we feel ourselves to be perishing, we shall rejoice in being able to look to such a Saviour. Faith grows gradually and strongly when the peril and the Saviour are continually present to our thoughts. Then, with salvation ever more and more present to us as a reality, the sense of God's love to the world will be also more and more an inspiring power in our hearts.—Y.

**Ver. 30.—*John and Jesus.*** We have here—

**I. A MAN PUTTING SELF IN ITS PROPER PLACE.** John is a man ready to say, "I must decrease." If he had not been a man ready to say it, he would never have got the chance of saying it. Ability to speak in this spirit does not spring up all at once. Much in John's position was very tempting to self. It is easily seen how painful it might have been to hear friends coming to say that the crowds once wont to flock round John were now flocking round Jesus. But John had self well in check and discipline. And we must have the same attainment, or self-humiliation in some shape will assuredly come. The truly humble man never can be humiliated. John must ever have borne himself humbly, not forgetting his own sins while so earnest in denouncing the sins of others. We must be willing to accept any kind of decrease that is for the world's good and Christ's glory. Put self in the proper place; that is, always keep it out of the first place.

**II. A MAN PUTTING CHRIST IN HIS PROPER PLACE.** The increase of Christ and the decrease of John were all of a piece. John's work was soon done. His message was

soon given, and then he could only begin over again. With all his greatness he was only one among the company of witnesses. He did his own work in his own generation, and then passed away. He had his time of increase—disciples increasing, influence increasing, name more widely known; and then Jesus comes on the scene, and there is no room for Jesus and John together. But in his own decrease John can rejoice, for it is a consequence of the increase of Jesus. The day never came when Jesus had to look upon some successor to himself and say, "He must increase, and I must decrease." That is the only satisfactory decrease in any of us which comes by the increase of Christ. He can never have too much authority, never be too much spoken about. As life goes on, the feeling should deepen that we cannot do without him.

III. A MAN PUTTING HIS FELLOW-MEN IN THEIR PROPER PLACE. One can see a certain chivalry and nobleness in these disciples of John, a certain intention not to desert their master. But John intimates that going to Jesus in the right spirit is advance and not apostasy. It is going from a lower school to a higher. John can only begin; Jesus must finish. Swearing by human teachers and authorities is a miserable business. It is the Spirit of the Lord Jesus himself who is to lead us into truth. There is no true getting of understanding unless we understand from Jesus what he wishes, what he claims, what he proposes.

IV. A MAN WHOM JESUS WILL PUT IN HIS TRUE PLACE AT LAST. It is only relatively that John decreases. Ceasing to serve in a way that draws great public attention, he yet goes on with real service just as much. Jesus will glorify in his own way those who glorify him, and it will be the best way. Not a servant of Christ, however obscure his sphere, however self-forgetting his life, slips to the grave without his Master's notice. There is a sense in which we are able to say, and bound to say, "He must increase, and I must increase too."—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

### CHAPTER IV.

VERB. 1—42.—7. *The ministry and revelation of the Lord to those beyond the strict compass of the theocracy.* This passage describes an incident of consummate interest, and records a specimen of our Lord's intercourse with individuals, and the reaction of that instruction upon the disciples. The event is a solitary chink through which the light of historical fact falls upon an otherwise darkened and unknown period of the Saviour's life. When we skirt a forest we see at intervals, where by some accident of growth the light falls upon a narrow space, a miniature world of life and loveliness of every kind, suggesting what might happen if every square yard of the forest could receive a similar illumination. Every day of that wondrous life of Christ may have been equally full of meaning to some souls. "These things are written, that we may believe that Jesus is the Son of God; and that believing we may have life."

The relation of the Jews to the Samaritans gives a special character and both typical and symbolical meaning to the incident. The lifelike reality of the scene, the

extreme unlikelihood of such an event having been fabricated with consummate art to establish any specific theological conclusion, the natural appropriateness of the transaction, all confer a high value and historicity upon this paragraph. Thoma, after the manner of Strauss, finds the origin of every detail in the story of Eliezer at the well; but there are no limits to what allegorists may dream, if the reins are thrown on the neck of imagination. The story of Philip's ministry in Samaria and the successes of the gospel in the early days of Christianity are also supposed to have aided the composition of the story. In our opinion, Acts viii. is better explained from John iv. than the reverse process. Baur's supposition, that the author sought to contrast the cautious hesitation of the Jewish doctor with the susceptible emotional-disposition of the Samaritan woman as the representative of the Gentile world, is unreasonable. The woman is represented as a believer in Divine revelation and worship, in the early traditions of the Jews themselves, and even in their Messianic hopes, which, in this instance, were more spiritual than those of the Jews.

There are numerous debates as to the origin of the Samaritan nation, and opinions waver as to whether they were the descendants of those remnants of the kingdom of Israel who were left in the district once occupied by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, after the final deportation under Shalmaneser (or Sargon, as the Assyrian inscriptions make probable), together with the heathen settlers who had been mixed up with them, or were solely and purely of Assyrian origin, as they appear to maintain (Ezra iv. 2). The narrative of 2 Kings xxv. 12 implies that all the inhabitants were carried away to cities of the Medes, but it is tolerably clear and eminently probable (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9) that there were some of the people left behind; so that the extent to which Israelitish blood and ideas prevailed in the mongrel race is very difficult to determine. We know that heathen notions of Jehovah, and the worship of graven images, were curiously blended (2 Kings xvii. 28—41; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 7). But this is only what might be anticipated if their moral and religious degeneration corresponded with the charges brought against them by Hosea and Amos. In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, efforts on their part to shafe in the honours and independence of Judah were sternly interdicted, and the interdiction avenged by angry re-ominations which delayed the progress of reconstruction. The antagonism commenced then was deepened into a deadly rivalry by the erection of a temple to Jehovah on Mount Gerizim (B.C. 409), and by Manasseh, brother of the high priest of Judah, being driven from Jerusalem by his refusal to renounce Sanballat's daughter, and by his becoming high priest of the heretical temple. This temple on Gerizim, in close proximity with the site of Shechem, the abode of the first patriarchs, gave dignity and solidity to some of their traditions and claims; and the modifications they had introduced into the text of the Pentateuch in their celebrated version of it helped to aggravate the schism between the two peoples. The district of country was held during the quarrels of the Ptolemies and Seleucids alternately by both. Samaritan hatred of the Jews led them to purchase peace during the cruel oppression of Judah

under Antiochus Epiphanes, by dedicating their temple to Zeus (Josephus, 'Ant.' xii. 5, 5), and again by siding with the Syrians against the Maccabees. Their temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, B.C. 130, and its ruins only were visible in the time of Christ. The city of Sebaste was built by Herod, on the site of the city of Samaria, and *Flavia Neapolis*, now called *Nablous*, was erected on the site or close neighbourhood of the ancient Shechem. There were mutual recriminations between Jews and Samaritans, which led to strained relations and fierce condemnation, and yet, strange to say, the rabbis did not treat the land as "unclean" (Eldersheim, 'Life of Jesus the Messiah,' bk. iii. c. 7), and consequently the disciples were not precluded from purchasing articles of food from the Samaritan village. They were the "foolish people," "abhorred" of devout Jews (Ecclus. i. 25, 26); and Rabbi Chuda treated them as heathens, yet Simon ben Gamaliel regarded them as Israelites, and the 'Mishnah' shows that in many of their customs they resembled the Jews. It is doubtful whether they denied the resurrection, and it is certain that their principal tenets and practices were derived from the old revelation. The opposition was felt so strongly by some Jews in the northern province of Galilee that they travelled to Jerusalem through Persæ in order to avoid it.

Our Lord's treatment of Samaritans in this narrative seems at first sight inconsistent with Matt. x. 5, where the apostles are advised to avoid cities of the Samaritans on their first experimental journey. Still, there is a difference between Christ's "passing through" Samaria, on his way to Galilee, and his limiting the early proclamation of the kingdom to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The disciples were not then to be entrusted with a commission which, not until after Pentecost, they would fulfil with so much joy (Acts viii.). The success of Philip, Peter, and John may have been due to the first sowing of the heavenly seed by the Lord himself.

That Christ should have chosen a woman of doubtful reputation from a semi-alien and accursed race to have received some of his greatest teaching (albeit there was no less an ear than John's at hand to record the



marvel) is akin to many of the mysteries of his life. Why, it is sometimes asked, did he not proclaim his sublimest thoughts in the schools or temple courts? Why did he confine them to Nicodemus and the Samaritaness? There is no reason to compel us to any such conclusion. The simple fact before us is full justification of the belief that on many another occasion as well as on this, he uttered like things.

Vers. 1—6.—(1) *The contrast between Jewish unsusceptibility and Samaritan predisposition to faith.*

Vers. 1, 2.—When therefore the Lord<sup>1</sup>—a few occasions are found in the Gospels where this appellative, without any proper name, is used for Jesus (ch. vi. 23; xi. 2; Luke x. 1; xvii. 5; xxii. 61), and on these occasions some special suggestion is made of the Divine rank and personality of Jesus—knew that the Pharisees heard; i.e. were taking notice, after their wont, with secret malice and with open hostility, of the course which he was pursuing. The treatment which John the Baptist received at their hands was pointedly referred to by our Lord on two occasions (Matt. xvii. 12, 13; xxi. 23—32). They did not believe in John's baptism. The publicans and harlots had repented and pressed into the kingdom before them. This "generation" did whatever it listed to the Elias. Therefore we judge that Herod's persecution, stimulated by his guilty passions, was assisted by "the offspring of vipers." They had probably broken up the baptismal enthusiasm of the multitudes, and aided Herod to shut up John in the castle of Machærus, and hence their present "hearing" meant immediate and hostile action. Jesus had left the temple, and retired to the courts and homes and neighbourhood of Jerusalem; and then was only visited at night by solitary men, who ought to have come in crowds. He left Jerusalem itself for some point in Judæan territory, and there continued for a season the preparatory call for repentance and conversion. The extraordinary success of Jesus at this period excited the special attention of the Pharisees. The matter that came to their ears was that Jesus makes and baptizes more disciples than John. In other words, they heard of an extraor-

dinary wave of popular excitement, yet of nothing answering to the Baptist's imagination of what ought to have taken place. John's ideas corresponded more closely than the teaching of Jesus did with the tenets and methods of the Pharisees. We find that the disciples of John are coupled with Pharisees in the matter of fasting (Matt. ix. 14 and parallel passages), yet that John's preaching and baptism were distasteful to the Pharisees. *A fortiori* the baptism of Jesus would be still more offensive, for it was doubtless accompanied by more searching demands. It had invaded the temple precincts, it had advanced more conspicuous personal claims. John said, "I am come to prepare the way of the Lord;" Jesus said, "I am come down from heaven." (Although (and yet) Jesus himself (in person) baptized not, but his disciples performed the act.) This parenthetical clause, explanatory of the statement of ch. iii. 22, as well as of the previous verse, is justified on the simple ground that Jesus baptized with the Spirit, and not with water. For him to baptize into his own name would have been to darken the mystery; for him to baptize into One who should come would in a way have hidden the fact that he had come. The administration of the rite by the few disciples who were with him would preserve all the symbolism of the new observance. We have no repetition of this statement, nor the faintest hint that the apostles continued this Johannine ceremonial. Moulton and some others lay emphasis on the present tenses, "makes and baptizes," and therefrom argue that the ministry of John had not yet been brought to a termination, that John was not yet cast into prison, and that the journey into Galilee does not correspond with that described in Matt. iv., but that our Lord removed from Judæa simply to avoid the apparent rivalry between the two baptismal and evangelistic ministries. When Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard, etc., he resolved upon a new and startling course.

Ver. 3.—He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee. But it should be observed that ἀφῆκε is a very peculiar word for a simple departure. The verb ἀφίημι is used when καταλείπω might have been expected (Westcott). The word means "to leave a thing to itself," to its own ways, to treat it as no longer exercising an influence on the mind. (It is, with the noun ἄφesis, used for "forgive," "forgiveness," of sins.) Jesus left Judæa, which had so imperfectly accepted his claims. The word suggests that his departure was a consequence of the action of the Pharisees; *And he departed again.*<sup>1</sup> This refers to the first departure

<sup>1</sup> Ὁ Κύριος, with A, B, C, 83, Harclean Syriac, T.R., R.T., Alford, Tregelles. Westcott and Hort; ὁ Ἰησοῦς, with N, D, some cursives, Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, is read by Tischendorf (8th edit.), and is placed in the margin by Alford, Tregelles, and Bære Revisers.

<sup>1</sup> The πάλιν is not found in A, B\*, Γ, Δ,

after the early testimonies of John, when Jesus went to Cana and Capernaum (ch. i. 43). Whether this journey corresponded with that mentioned in Matthew and Mark, as following the baptism and temptation of Jesus, or not, it is not to be confounded with the journey which John had already recorded.

Ver. 4.—And he must needs go through Samaria. There was no physical necessity about it. He might, as bigoted Jews were accustomed to do, have crossed the Jordan and passed through Peræa instead. There was no such animus in the heart of Jesus, and a Divine and providential monition was the occasion of his taking the direct road. Geikie has drawn a vivid picture of the difficulties to which Jewish travellers on the borders of Samaria were exposed (see Hos. vi. 9; Josephus, 'Ant.,' xx. 6. 1; 'Bell. Jud.,' ii. 12. 4; 'Vit.,' 52), and also of the physical features of the land. Samaria, as a name of the small district of central Palestine, arose from the name of the city "Samaria," built by Omri, and made the site of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 24), and that of the Baal- and of the calf-worship. Samaria suffered from the siege, and the city was depopulated by Shalmanezzer (Sargon), and colonized with Assyrians under Esarhaddon. It was destroyed by Hircanus, and rebuilt in splendour by Herod the Great, and by him dedicated to Augustus, and called *Sebaste* after him. Though Shechem (equivalent to Sichem) was the more famous site, and overshadowed Herod's city by its historical interest, yet "Samaria" was the name which has survived all others, and covered a larger space. Jesus was probably on the borders of Samaria, in the Judæan country, before he commenced his journey. Samaria was included in the tetrarchy of Archelaus, and formed part of the province under the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate; while Herod Antipas reigned over Galilee and Peræa. The Lord was fulfilling the Divine will, in commencing his Galilæan ministry, in leaving Judæa proper for the present, and passing through Samaria. It is worthy of notice that John here attributes to "the Pharisees," rather than "the Jews," the opposition which indicated the wisdom or necessity of this course.

Ver. 5.—He cometh therefore to a city of Samaria, called Sychar (Συχαρ, with all the principal uncials; not Σιχαρ, as read by the Elzevir edition of Stephens, with one

cursive, 69); not "the city" Shechem—the Συχεμ of Acts vii. 16, or Σικεμα of Josephus (Gen. xxxiii. 18; Josh. xx. 7; Judg. ix. 7)—not Sebaste (Samaria), but "a city," one of the cities requiring special designation beyond its mere name, which would hardly have been necessary, if so renowned a spot as the metropolis of the ancient kingdom, or the ancient patriarchal city of Shechem or Sychem, had been thought of. The similarity of the names Sychar and Sichem led many to suppose that John confounded either the names or the places. Those who were anxious to undervalue the accuracy of the author have attributed it to mistake. Schenkel still sees the error of a Gentile Christian. Others have supposed that the word, meaning "town of drunkards" (Isa. xxviii. 1, שכר), or "town of liars" (Hab. ii. 18, שקר), was intentionally applied by John to Shechem, or that some provincial pronunciation of the name of the old city had thus been commemorated. Hengstenberg suggested that Sychar was a suburb of Sichem or Shechem, and Robinson placed the latter much nearer to Jacob's well than the present Nablous. Tholuck gave a philosophical solution—that *m* and *r* in the two words, being *liquida*, were interchanged; and Meyer at one time held that John simply applied the vulgar name. Jerome ('Quæst. Heb. in Gen. xlviii.') said it was a corruption of the name Sichem. But Eusebius discriminated Shechem from Sychar in his 'Onomasticon,' *sub voce*; and a place called *Sochar* or *Sichra* is mentioned, and also its "well," in the Talmud. Delitzsch ('Zeitschrift für Luth. Theol.,' 1856) has quoted seven passages which refer to the place as the birthplace of rabbis, and as having been alternately occupied by Jews and Samaritans. Moreover, in late years, Palestine explorers have found, within half a mile of Jacob's well, a village, *El 'Askar*, preserving to the present day the old name.<sup>1</sup> Nor has the name been in late years drawn from this narrative and given to this insignificant village, for a Samaritan chronicle, dating from the twelfth century, preserves the name as *Iskar*. *A priori* it is far more probable that a woman of Sychar, than one of Shechem, should have come to draw water, in consequence of the nearer proximity of the former "city" than of the latter to Jacob's well. It is further characterized as near to the parcel of ground

nor in many cursives, and was at one time omitted by Griesbach and Tischendorf; but Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, Revised Version, retain it, on the authority of N, B\*, C, D, L, the best cursives, and numerous versions.

JOHN.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Conder ('Tent-Work in Palestine,' i. 71, etc.), and 'Pict. Palestine,' vol. i. 236, have described it at length. Canon Williams advocated this solution. Ederseim ('Life of Christ,' App. xv. vol. ii. 764), Westcott, and others defend it.

M

which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. In Gen. xxxiii. 19; xxxiv. 25; xlviii. 22 (LXX.); Josh. xxiv. 32, we see that Jacob's treaty with the sons of Hamor, and the summary violence of his sons in punishment of Dinah's dishonour, were treated by him as giving him special possession in Shechem (the LXX., in Gen. xlviii. 22, have translated the word for "portion," חֵצֵק as *Σίσιμα*, erroneously supposing that the word was a proper name, instead of an allusive play on the word "Shechem"), and he solemnly bequeathed it to Joseph. In Josh. xxiv. 32 we find the bones of Joseph were deposited there. (Knobel translates Gen. xlviii. 22 as the portion which he, Jacob, (by his sons) would win (not had won) with sword and bow.) Geiger, 'Urschrift,' p. 80 (referred to by Edersheim, *l.c.*, i. 404), shows that St. John's interpretation of Genesis is perfectly in harmony with rabbinic tradition.

Ver. 6.—Now Jacob's well was there; more literally, *now there was a spring there, Jacob's*. The word generally translated "well" is *φρέαρ*, the representative of פְּרַעַר, *puteus*; but πηγή, the word here used, corresponds with פֶּי, *fons*. In vers. 11, 12 the word *φρέαρ* is used of the same place. To the present day this indubitable site goes by both names. This district abounds in springs (Deut. viii. 7), and the digging of this deep well was a work of supererogation, such as might be performed by a stranger in the land. The well is indeed fed by fountains of water in the neighbourhood. It has been known as Jacob's well by a continuous tradition, and is situated in the plain of Mukhhan, under the rough sides of Gerizim, just beyond the spot where the plain is entered almost at right angles by the eastern end of the vale of Shechem. The latter vale is constituted by the two mountain ridges of Gerizim on the south and Ebal on the north. Nablous, or Shechem, is not visible from the well of Sychar, being hidden by the spur of Gerizim from view, and higher up the valley of Shechem are the present ruins of Sebastieh or Samaria proper. Dean Stanley said it was one of the most beautiful spots in Palestine. Sychar lies half a mile to the north of the traditional well. The well, two hundred years ago, was declared by Maundrell to be a hundred and five feet deep, and built of solid masonry. In 1866 Lieutenant Anderson found it seventy-five feet deep, and quite dry. It is nine or ten feet in diameter; and it is one of the most indubitable spots where we may feel certain that the feet of the blessed Lord have trod. Efforts are now being made by the Palestine Exploration Society to protect and restore the well. Jesus therefore, being wearied (*κονιδας* is "to labour

unto weariness," from *κονος*, exhausting toil) with his journey. A long, exhausting march told upon him, and he felt the weakness of our humanity. Thoma suggests that, because the woman that Jacob found at the well was Rachel, the mother of Joseph, the Samaritans' special patriarch, and because Leah was the mother of Levi and Judah, and her name means "wearied," so Jesus is represented as weary with his journey unto the home of Rachel! It is far more important to notice that the author of this Gospel, whose main idea was that Jesus is "the only begotten Son of the Father," "the Word made flesh," yet impresses upon us continually his realization of the full humanity, the definite, concrete human existence of Jesus. His life was no phantasm of the imagination, no mere doctetic manifestation, as the Tübingen school attribute to the Johannine Christ, but veritable man. This Gospel alone records his presence and miracle at Cana, his travel-worn sympathy with our weakness, his making clay with spittle, his weeping over the grave of a friend, his thirst upon the cross, the blood that issued from his wounded side, and the obvious physical reality of his risen body, and thus furnishes the Church with the grounds on which the apostle maintained his Divine humanity. Jesus was seated thus—or, *sat thus*; i.e. wearied, exhausted—on the well; or on the low parapet of the well, which protected its mouth. He sat there comparatively, if not quite, alone. The position of the word "thus" after "sat" would, in classic Greek, make the *οὕτως* mean "simply, without other preoccupation;" but there is no logical reason to deprive the *οὕτως* of its full meaning (Hengstenberg). The Lord, taking his seat by this memorable spot, rich in varied associations, becomes at once a type of the richer and diviner supply of life which he is able and ready to dispense to mankind. The weariness and waiting of the Lord at the well was a sublime hint of the exhaustless supply of grace which was ever flowing from the broken heart of the Son of God. It was about the sixth hour. The author is remarkable for his repeated mention of the hours at which some of the most memorable crises of his life took place, and thus gives a vivid impression of reality and of the presence of the eye-witness. He must himself have waited by the side of the Lord, and overheard the conversation which followed, just as he did the conversation with Nicodemus. Great difference of opinion prevails as to his method of computing time; i.e. whether he adopted the Jewish computation, from sunrise to sunset into twelve variable hours, or the Roman method of computation, from

midnight to midday, from noon to midnight, into twelve hours of equal length. Some difficulties are reduced by the latter hypothesis (see McClellan and Westcott, 'Additional Notes to John xix.,' Edersheim, l.c., i. 405; Moulton, *in loco*; Townson, 'Discourses of the Four Gospels,' p. 215). The hour referred to would then be about six o'clock in the evening, the very time when purchases would be made, and when women are in the habit of drawing water. The difficulty that presents itself is the brevity of the time remaining for all that happens as described in vers. 27—38, broad daylight being almost presupposed in ver. 35. Still, if "about the sixth hour" was five o'clock, even in January there would be possible time for the conversation, for the return of the disciples, and also for the approach of the Samaritans; though it must be remembered that twilight in Palestine is very brief, and that the whole narrative suggests the idea of leisure rather than hurried converse. If the Roman method of interpretation were adopted, the sixth hour *might* mean six o'clock in the morning, which was the hour intended, if the Roman computation *must* be supposed in ch. xix. 14. This suggestion has further difficulties. The weariness of the Lord at that early hour would imply a long journey before daybreak, which is extremely improbable (see ch. xi. 9). Besides, though Townson and McClellan lay emphasis on this Roman computation of time in Asia Minor, and advance some proof of it, yet some of their authorities are far from proving it. Luthardt says we have no right to suppose that John would deviate from the current Jewish computation. "About the sixth hour" would therefore mean "about noon," the very time when it is so common to rest after a morning journey. Lücke, Meyer, Hengstenberg, Godet, Lange, Schaff, Geikie, Watkins, all press the same interpretation of the words. Lücke justly says that there is no hint of the Lord and his disciples intending to remain by the well, but to pursue their journey after rest and food. This is inconsistent with the idea of an evening halt.

Vers. 7—26.—(2) *The revelations and misunderstandings comprised in the interview with the Samaritaness.*

Vers. 7—9.—(a) *The Giver of all asks alms, submitting to conditions of humanity.*

Ver. 7.—There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. The *ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρίας* undoubtedly qualifies the word *γυνή*, and not *ἐρηται*; therefore the country, not the city, of Samaria is referred to. Besides, that city was at much too great a distance to be the home of this Samaritaness. There were other springs still nearer to the city of

Sychar, which the women of the place would frequent. We need not, with Hengstenberg, suppose that, from a religious motive, one of reverence for the well of Jacob, this woman had chosen the longer walk and greater exertion, in the heat of the day. No hint of the kind occurs. The simple supposition that her home was hard by the well is sufficient to explain the somewhat unusual circumstance that she should have come alone and at midday. No longer, as in ancient times, did women of social position perform this duty (Gen. xxiv. 15; Exod. ii. 16). She by her action proclaimed her humble station in life. Hard work is performed by women at the present day in the East and South. Jesus saith to her, Give me to drink. This form of expression is not uncommon. The Lord was not only weary, but veritably thirsty. He had taken upon himself all our innocent desires and cravings. "He would know all, that he might succour all," and was intent upon conferring a blessing by asking a favour. He put it into her power to do him a kindness, just as when God evermore says, "Give me thy heart," when he is yearning to give himself to us. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He will at once confer on this poor "waif and stray" the unspeakable privilege of bestowing the cup of cold water on the Lord of all. It is not that in the first instant he implied that he was thirsting for her salvation; that interpretation would almost lift the narrative into the purely symbolic region, greatly to its injury, and to the damage of the entire Gospel.

Ver. 8.—For his disciples had departed into the city to buy food. This is stated as a reason why he asked water from the chance wayfarer, who had obviously with her the "water-pot" and the *ὑδρίη* (ver. 11), a word used for the rope with which the bucket or water-jar was let down into the well. There are very discordant statements as to the degree of separation which the Jews insisted upon between themselves and Samaritans. The later rabbis greatly aggravated the feeling. They refused to eat the bread of Samaritans, as though it were more defiling than swine's flesh; objected to drink their wine or vinegar; and, if this animosity at the time of Christ had been equally pronounced, would have limited the disciples in their choice of food to uncooked eggs, fruits, and vegetables, and possibly to meal and wine. But it seems, from the earlier rabbinical books (Edersheim quotes several, which modify Lightfoot's authorities), that the meat of a Samaritan was lawful food if an Israelite had witnessed its killing, and that their bread, wine, etc., were not forbidden. We see no reason for thinking that Jesus was left absolutely alone on this occasion,

and, from John's habitual method of avoiding direct mention of himself, it becomes perfectly possible that he was there listening silently to all these gracious words. Moulton cannot doubt that the beloved disciple subsequently received the whole from the Lord's own lips; but there is no reason to conclude that he must have been absent, and very much to suggest his quiet presence (Weiss, 'Life of Christ,' ii. 34).

**Vers. 9.—**The Samaritan woman therefore saith to him, How is it (compare this "how" with that of Nicodemus. Jesus had at once provoked inquiry, which he was not unwilling to gratify)—How is it that thou, being a Jew? She would have known that he was a Jew by his speech, for the Samaritans were accustomed to turn the sound of *sh* into that of *s*; and so, when Jesus said in Jewish Aramaic, *Teni lish'koth*, "Give me to drink," while she would herself have said, *Teni lise-koth*, his speech would betray him. Again, the contour of the Jewish face differs greatly from that of the Samaritan, and the customary fringes on their robes were of different national colours. Moreover, his appearance, travel-stained, weary, and thirsty, on the great highway between Galilee and Judæa, would have suggested at once that he was no Samaritan. Askest drink from me, who am a Samaritan, and a woman, too? Already this was a startling puzzle, for her experience so far had only shown her that Jews have no dealings (a word only once and here used in the New Testament) with Samaritans.<sup>1</sup> Most commentators suppose that this is an explanatory remark of the evangelist, pointing to the absence, in a hostile and haughty spirit, of all pleasant relations between the peoples (see note at commencement of chapter). We are not compelled to this conclusion. The words may just as likely have been the pert, half-ironical tone of the woman, who was drawing a contrast between the current profession of Israelites and the request which the need of Jesus had extorted (Moulton). The eighth verse had just said that the disciples had clearly some dealings with Samaritans, and had gone to purchase food at Sychar, taking with them the apparatus used for drawing water. This last fact is the evangelist's reason for introducing the remark of the woman. He would hardly have made it himself.

**Vers. 10—15.—(b) The living water offered and misunderstood.**

**Vers. 10.—**Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou hadst known the gift of God

(but thou dost not;—this conclusion is involved in the form of the conditional sentence), and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink. Many suggestions are offered as to the meaning here of the "gift of God." Elsewhere (ch. iii. 16) Christ is himself God's Gift, and St. Paul speaks of Christ as God's unspeakable Gift (Hengstenberg). Paul also declares that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." The living water, the refreshing, life-giving stream of blessedness which Christ is opening in this wilderness, is the meaning put back by some into these memorable words as they first fell from the lips of Jesus. So Lampe and Godet. But Augustine and others point to ch. vii. 39, where John tells us that the living water of which Jesus speaks as welling up like a river in the heart of a believer, in the bosom of one who has come to him to slake his otherwise quenchless thirst, is "the Spirit," which those who believe on him should receive when Jesus would be glorified. This sublime renewal of the greatest gift of God by the Spirit is set forth under similar imagery in Isa. xlv. 3 and Joel ii. 28. However, words are functions of two minds; what they must or might have meant to her must have been Christ's meaning when he uttered them. The explanatory clause, *Who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink*, solves the perplexity. That the Son of God, that the *Logos* in flesh, should have so emptied himself of his eternal glory as to ask for water from a Samaritan, and a woman, is in itself a gift, the supreme gift, of God. She did not know the fulness of his nature. So Lange, Grotius, and others. A remark by Dr. Yeomans is singularly suggestive: "The context shows that 'the gift of God' is a gift which God had already given, rather than one yet held in reserve—the *actual gift* of his condescension, rather than the offered gift of living water, or the Holy Ghost." Had she known it and put the two thoughts together in the rudest fashion, she would have known the gift of God, and she would have become the suppliant at once, and he the Giver. Thou wouldst have asked (prayed, taken the position of the inferior) of him, and he would have given to thee living water. (For the phrase, "living water," see Gen. xxvi. 19; and for its application, Zech. xiv. 8; Jer. ii. 13; Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 6; xxii. 1.) The Divine supply of heaven-sent life, which will slake all thirst for lesser gifts, and which will constitute the perennial blessedness of saved and glorified spirits. The gift of God is the full discovery of personal relations with the veritable Source of all life. This becomes life eternal as it leads to knowledge of the only God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent; and assists a full realization of the life,

<sup>1</sup> The Revised Version has indicated in the margin that this clause is omitted by ancient authorities. Tischendorf (8th edit.) omits it, with N\*, D, α, b, e; Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, retain it, with T.R., R.T., etc.

the Source and End of which are God. It is interesting to notice that Philo, in many places, declares these wells of water (Gen. xxix. 2) to mean "true philosophy or wisdom, deep and only with difficulty drawn upon." "Flowing water is the Logos himself, 'cisterns' represent memories of past knowledge;" but the Old Testament usage quoted above is a far more rational justification of the language used by our Lord.

Ver. 11.—The answer of the woman shows that, though startled as Jesus meant her to be by his self-assertion, she had not moved out of the limited region of her own thoughts—her physical thirst, her daily needs, and common appliances for meeting them. There is a touch of humour for this light-hearted creature in the contrast between the large offer and the apparent helplessness of the Offerer. God's folly is compared with man's wisdom; God's weakness is set over against man's strength. Sir (my master—a phrase here of simple courtesy, yet showing some advance on what had gone before, "Thou being a Jew"), neither hast thou the vessel to draw with, and, moreover, the well is deep (see above on ver. 6). The water of this well cannot be lifted without an *ἀντλημα*, and, when the water is reached, it is still open to question whether it be living, flowing water or not. Whence then hast thou the living water of which thou hast spoken?

Ver. 12.—Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle? We observe here the Samaritaness's claim to be a descendant of Ephraim, of Joseph, of Jacob himself who dug the well. By rising up behind the family of Ephraim to the father of Judah as well as of Joseph, the woman claims a kind of kinship with Jesus. The "our" in this case is not a monopoly of the honours of Jacob for herself and her people. Her national pride is softening under the glance of the great Son of David, and she has a growing sense of the claims and dignity of the Person she is addressing, though her thought is couched in words that may be ironical. This was the kind of challenge which our Lord never refused to honour. Just as on other occasions he claimed to be "greater than the temple," and "Lord of the sabbath," and "before Abraham," and "greater than Moses, Solomon," or "Jonas," so here he quietly admits that he is indeed greater than "our father Jacob." The lifelike reality of the scene is evidenced in the alertness and feminine loquacity of the final clause (*θρέμματα* are "cattle," not "servants," as seen in passages quoted by Meyer from Xenophon, Plato, Josephus, etc.). The nomadic condition of the first fathers of this race is brilliantly touched off by the sentence.

Ver. 13.—Jesus answered and said to her—leaving the question of his superiority to "our father Jacob" to be settled when she should understand him better—Every one who drinketh (is in the habit of drinking) from this water, or any similar fountain, will thirst again. Earthly desires obtain temporary satisfaction, and then resume their sway. Our whole life is made up of intermittent desires and partial satisfaction, of passion and satiation, of *ennui* and then of some new longing. This flow and ebb, ebb and flow, of desire belong to the very nature of human appetite. More than that, human desire is never really satiated. Our souls can never be at rest till they find rest in God. This water, even from the well of Jacob, is no exception to the rule.

Ver. 14.—But whosoever shall have drunk of the water which I will give him (of which I am speaking) shall not (by any means, *οὐ μὴ*) thirst again for ever. How different from the words of the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xxiv. 21), "They who drink of me," says Wisdom, "shall thirst again"! They will experience neither continuity nor completeness of enjoyment, but periods of incessant and recurrent desire. Jesus speaks of a Divine and complete satisfaction. The spiritual thirst once slaked, the heavenly desire once realized by appropriating the gift of God, is fundamentally satisfied. The nature itself is changed. How closely this corresponds with the idea of birth into a new world! and how nearly akin to the promise of living water in ch. vii. 37, etc. (see also the language of ch. vi. 35)! But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water leaping up (welling, bubbling up and forth) into eternal life. This is the explanation of the full satisfaction of desire. I do not give a simple "drink of water," but I cause a spring, a perennial fountain, a river of Divine pleasure to issue and flow from that inward satisfaction which follows a reception of my gifts; and it is so abundant that it is enough for everlasting needs. The water that I give becomes a fountain, and the fountain swells into a river, and the river expands into and loses itself in the great ocean of eternity. The beauty of the image is lost if, with Luthardt and Moulton, we attach the *eis ζωὴν αἰώνιον* to *πηγὴ* rather than *ἀλλομένου* (*ἀλλέσθαι* is not elsewhere applied to water, and this use of it gives the metaphor all the more force). The imagery is not without its difficulty. We are tempted to conclude from it that the Divine life, once given, becomes consciously a self-dependent force within the soul; but this would not be justified by all the analogy of the Divine working in humanity, which, though abundant, efficacious, and satisfying, never repudiates its Divine

source, but continually proclaims it. If the desire for what God alone can supply is eager and quenchless, and if God meet the craving, then the desire is absolutely satisfied. There is a superfluous fullness in the gift of God which will transcend all the needs of this life, and be enough for eternity.

Ver. 15.—The woman has not yet emerged out of the region of her physical desires and her daily requirements, and needs a deeper apprehension of her real necessities. By reason of the subsequent narrative she ought not to be credited now with impertinence or irony (Lightfoot, Tholuck). She could not understand the miraculous water of which the Stranger spake, but had some dim notion that he might be able to deliver her from her toilsome and exhausting life. She replies to him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw. The Lord had spoken of eternal life, and she is content to have temporal satisfaction to the extent of thirsting no more. Some commentators, with Lange and Hengstenberg, suppose that the journey to Jacob's well was in her mind a quasi-religious act, the insufficiency of which to meet her case is at length becoming apparent. This view seems to us inconsistent with the sudden change of metaphor and alteration of his method of approach to this woman's consciousness and need. He resolved rather to search her heart and reveal her to herself—to bring forth from its hiding-place the torpid conscience, and reveal to her the grievous need in which she stood of that Divine cleansing, healing, nutrition, refreshment, which he had been sent into the world to supply. This reflection renders the reply of Jesus less obscure than its abrupt transition seems to imply.

Vers. 16—20.—(c) *The heart-searching issuing in perception of the prophetic rank of Jesus*

Ver. 16.—[Jesus]<sup>1</sup> saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. Our Lord, by that Divine penetration and thought-reading which the evangelist attributes to him (ch. ii.), knew exactly what manner of woman this was, and wished to bring her secret sins to the light of her own conscience. The demand touched her heart at its most tender place, and was indeed a partial answer to her prayer, "Give me this water." Conviction of sin is the beginning of the great work of the Paraclete; it will end in full assurance of faith (so Neander, Stier, Tholuck, Luthardt, Weiss, and Edersheim). Numerous have been the explanations of the Saviour's demand, but none of them so congruous as this: e.g. (1) Lücke supposes

that Christ would have the husband share in the bounty. (2) Meyer suggests that the Lord, by proving to her his prophetic glance in a region she could verify, was preparing her for similar confidence in himself in a higher and more momentous region. (3) Hengstenberg makes it part of his curious, mystical interpretation of the entire narrative, and by "husband" thinks that Jesus meant the true Lord and Husband of the kingdom of God, in contrast to the heathen lordships and polluting idolatries which Samaritans had blended with their Jehovism (of which more in the next verse). (4) Lange has supposed that Jesus here conforms to law and custom with reference to the superior claim of the husband, and declares that the wife must submit to it in receiving the gift of the kingdom of God; and Godet says, "Jesus did not wish to influence a dependent person without the participation of the man with whom she was united." Jesus surely never waits upon conventionalisms, sabbatic rules, current fashions of any kind; and some deeper reason than this is more than apparent from the startling response.

Vers. 17, 18.—The woman answered, and said to him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou said correctly, Husband have I none: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. This true thing hast thou spoken. The woman resists the description which Jesus assumes that she bears to the man with whom she stands in illegal relations. Convinced, brought to bay, she cannot lie to Jesus. She says, in penitence and shame, "I have no husband." There is no concealment of the fact; she must need the cleansing of the life-giving stream. Jesus, not without a tone of solemn remonstrance, accuses her of a life of loose morals. It is implied that the first five husbands were conventionally allowable; but the suggestion is that, either by divorce or wanton rushing to further nuptials if the former had been ruptured by death, her character had been ever deteriorating until, under present circumstances, she was committing an overt act of illegality and impurity. "In saying thou hast no husband, thou hast spoken to the point, and for the reasons I recite thou hast made a true statement." As the woman in ver. 27 tells her friends "He told me all things that ever I did," we may easily believe that she felt, under his searching glance, that no folly, no weakness, no rebellious deed, no damning compromise, was hidden from him. How much more he said we can only conjecture. The revelation thus recorded is akin to other events in our Lord's life, which we cannot account for by the supposition that information

<sup>1</sup> T.R. and R.T. here read,  $\delta$  ἰησοῦς, but it is omitted by B, C, by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Alford, and Westcott and Hort.

concerning her had been conveyed by some rumour which thus he flashed upon her. This would suffer from the intolerable supposition that his claim to have prophetic light was a self-conscious fraud, and that by such a subterfuge the entire Samaritan mission had been characterized and controlled. Lange thought that the definite traces of the five marriages were in some mysterious fashion hieroglyphed upon her face. This is a great extravagance of the working of natural law, to avoid the supernatural perception which our Lord exercised whenever he chose to draw upon the inexhaustible resources and powers at his disposal. Hengstenberg ('Contributions to Genuineness of the Pentateuch,' and in his 'Commentary'), while he recognizes the historical fact here mentioned and penetrated by our Lord, considered that there was a twofold meaning in our Lord's reply. Thou hast had five husbands; *i.e.* there were five gods—those of Cuthah, Babylon, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim (Josephus, 'Ant.,' ix. 14. 3; 2 Kings xvii. 24), whose worship by spiritual adultery the Samaritan people (of which you are a representative) have tolerated, and *he*, Jehovah, whom thou now hast by surreptitious claim, is not thy covenanted Lord. Unfortunately, this too ingenious interpretation fails, first of all in this, that to the five nations *seven* gods are reckoned (2 Kings xvii. 30, 31). Again, it is inconceivable that the worship of Jehovah should be represented as on a par with these idolatries, and that Jehovah himself should be set forth as the sixth and worst of the theocratic husbands of the Samaritan state. Nor can we suppose that Christ, who said such wondrous things about the spirituality and the love of God to man, and was in the same breath about to utter one of the grandest of them, should thus have poured contumely on the Samaritan worship of Jehovah. Thoma practically adopts Hengstenberg's speculative interpretation. Strauss (1st and 2nd edit. 'Leb. Jes.')

made use of Hengstenberg's admission to find in the whole narrative a mythical fiction; and Keim has only made matters worse by ascribing the entire narrative to the unknown author of the Fourth Gospel. Christ's own Divine penetration revealed the woman to herself, and she knew how hateful her life must have been in his sight. She made no attempt at denial, or concealment, or self-justification. The events referred to had burnt themselves on her memory, and her only refuge is in a bold admission of the right of the unknown Stranger to teach. She concedes his claim to solve perplexities, and penetrate other mysteries as well as the depths of her own heart.

Ver. 19.—Sir, I perceive that thou art a

prophet. This meant more from a Samaritaness than from a Jewess. The Samaritans accepted the books of Moses, and did not adopt the teaching of the historical or prophetic books, on which the Jews had built up their exaggerated and carnal views of the Messiah and his kingdom. They were not anticipating a King, but a "Prophet like unto Moses." They placed the great Prophet above the King, as a peer of their legislature, and as superior to their rabbis and priests. The sense of standing in the presence of One who looked down into human hearts, justified her in putting the great case of her people and her own sins before him. Let him speak further. Peradventure he will set the relative claims of Zion and Gerizim at rest, so far as approach to the Holy One is concerned. More than ordinary candour was required to make the admission that a Jew might decide the age-long controversy.

Ver. 20.—Our fathers. The "our" refers here to the Samaritans, just as the "ye" does to the Jews. She may be going back once more to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who worshipped and laboured at Shechem—but the mountain itself was not the site of a temple until the days of Nehemiah, and the temple in which the apostate Manasseh, son of Jaddua, offered sacrifices had been destroyed for nearly a hundred and fifty years. A chronological, if not more serious, difference is apparent between Nehemiah and Josephus (Josephus, 'Ant.,' xi. 8. 2; Neh. xiii. 28). According to the former, the Samaritan schism which led to the erection of the temple was a hundred years before the period assigned by Josephus. For whereas Nehemiah says that the apostate priest whom he chased away was son-in-law of Sanballat, the Persian satrap in Samaria, Josephus makes Sanballat contemporary with Alexander, and represents the establishment of the Samaritan temple as originating with his approval. Josephus further ('Ant.,' xiii. 9. 1) says that the temple was destroyed by Hyrcanus, about B.C. 129, and adds that it had stood two hundred years. The temple was destroyed, but "the mountain of blessing" remained for the Samaritans as a place of prayer ('Ant.,' xviii. 4. 1; 'Bell. Jud.' i. 2. 6). This was conserved, on the ground that Abraham and Jacob had here built altars (Deut. xi. 26; xxvii. 4—13). In Deut. xxvii. 4, however, Mount Ebal is mentioned as the place where an altar had been first built to Jehovah. In the Samaritan Pentateuch the word "Gerizim" had in this place been substituted for 'Ebal;' and so it came to pass that Gerizim had been a place of prayer throughout the long interval. When Jesus



was at Jacob's well, he could see the ruins of the edifice where sacrifice and praises were being offered. Indeed, these have continued to the present day. The oldest shrine in the world for local worship still holds its own, hard by the very spot where the most complete overthrow of the principle of sacred places fell in divinest words from the lips of the Holy One. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain—Gerizim, where the ruins of the temple still abide—and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men must worship. Jerusalem is not mentioned in their sacred books—Jerusalem, whose unity of sanctuary was recognized at length as the *véros* where the Lord would put his Name, and where alone the sacrifices could possess their historic and symbolic validity. Whosoever the Pentateuch may have been finally edited, all critics will allow that, at the time of the Lord, and in the Samaritan Version of the Pentateuch, the idea of such unity of sanctuary was a fixed principle. The Samaritans claimed Gerizim, and the Jews Moriah, as the place where Abraham offered his typical sacrifice, and both regarded the worship celebrated in their favourite shrine—the daily offering, the annual feasts (the Passover especially)—as giving worthiness to all the prayers and praises which they might be induced to offer in all places where they might sojourn. The woman does not submit to our Lord that he may settle this great question for her, but she makes it clear enough that she would like to know his verdict. The worship was the sacrificial worship where sin such as hers could alone be cleansed, and where her conscience could be set free for calm and continuous communion with God.

Vers. 21—24.—(d) *The spiritual nature of God and his worship.*

Ver. 21.—Jesus saith unto her, Woman,<sup>1</sup> believe me—a unique expression of Jesus, answering to the *Ἀμήν, ἀμήν*, of many other passages, where the acknowledgment of his Divine commission had been virtually ceded; this expression is peculiarly suitable to the occasion—that an hour is coming. He does not add, as in ver. 23, “and now is.” The Divine order which links the events of God's providence together, has not made it possible as yet in its fulness, as it will do

when the revelation is complete, but the hour is drawing near, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, will ye worship the Father. Christ did not say that either Samaritans or Jews were exclusively right in their preference for one local shrine or place of sacrificial worship; but he declared the sublime truth that the worship of the Father would soon prove itself to be independent of both alike and of all the limitations of place and ceremony. Every place would be as sacred and as hallowed as these notable shrines, when the full character and real nature of the object of worship became fully known. *The Father* was a name for God not unknown to Jew or Gentile; but so overlaid, suspected, defamed, forgotten, that the emphasis which Jesus laid upon it came with the force of a new revelation of God's relation to man. Man is born in the image of God, and partakes of the nature and essence of the Supreme Being, and it is in God's true nature and veritable relations with men that he will be eventually adored. When Christ speaks of “my Father” he refers to the specialty of revelation of the fatherhood in his own incarnation. The Father was only partially known in and by all the dispensations of nature and grace, but he was especially revealed in the whole of the prolonged series of facts and symbols and prophetic teachings which constituted the religion of Israel; and Christ will not allow this great revelation of the Father to pass unacknowledged or to be ignored by one whom he essays to teach.

Ver. 22.—Ye worship that which (not “him whom”) ye know not. “That which” points to the essence and inner character of the object of their worship. They gave him a name, but they were comparatively ignorant of, and confessedly hostile as a people to, the revelation that the Father had made. They fell back on a past of rigid orthodoxy but of limited range. They rejected every portion of the Old Testament with the exception of the Pentateuch, i.e. the entire historical treatment of the primeval faith; even that very essence of it which involved the progressive and expanding conception of the character of God—the perpetuity and continuous renovation of relations, the prophetic insight into providence, the sublime liturgy of a ceaseless worship, the prediction of a Messianic glory which, in the fulness of the times, should complete and complement all that preceded. They were, by their prejudices and hostility, kept ignorant of and unacquainted with the Name that was above every name. In contradis-

<sup>1</sup> T.R. reads, *γύναι πιστεύσόν μοι*, with a large number of uncials, and with Italic and Syriac Versions; but Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, and Revised Version, Westcott and Hort, on the authority of N, B, C\*, D, L, 3, cursives, read, *πιστεύέ μοι γύναι*; the former implies a full and complete deference to the Lord's authority, and seems most in harmony with the circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> See remarks at the commencement of the chapter.

tion from this, we Jews, to whom as a nation you rightly conclude I belong, and as a representative of whom I speak—We worship that which we know. Christ in this place, more distinctly perhaps than in any portion of the four Gospels, places himself as a worshipper side by side with his hearers. Here, moreover, he identifies himself with the Jews—becomes their interpreter and mouthpiece and representative. When a question arises, which of the two has the larger amount of truth, Jew or Gentile, Jew or Samaritan, he pronounced in stringent terms in favour of the Jew. The revelation advancing beyond the narrow limitations of Samaritan nationality as to place, and time, and historic fact, with its pregnant ritual, has revealed the Father to us Jews, in this respect and because the salvation of which Moses partly dreamed, but which has been the burden of every prophecy and psalm—the “salvation” which gives meaning to all our knowledge, is from (*ἐκ*, not “belonging to,” but “proceeding from,” ch. i. 46; vii. 22, 52) the Jews. The Jews have been the school where the highest lessons have been taught, the richest experiences felt, the noblest lives lived, the types and shadows of good things to come most conspicuous. We cannot avoid reading between the lines the sublime enthusiasm which Paul gathered from this class of teaching (“To whom pertaineth the adoption, . . . and covenant, . . . whose are the fathers, and to whom were committed the oracles of God, . . . and from whom as concerning the flesh Christ came”). The utterance is profoundly significant, as it is a powerful repudiation of the theory which makes the author of this Fourth Gospel a Gentile of the second century, with a Gnostic antipathy to Judaism and Jews. The contradiction to this theory indubitably involved in this verse has led to the wildest conjectures—even the suggestion of a Jewish gloss on some ancient manuscripts of the Gospel has been one desperate device to save the theory. *Tant pis pour les faits.*

Ver. 23.—But the hour cometh, and now is—already the day has dawned, the new conception is breaking like “awful rose of dawn” upon the minds of some—when the veritable<sup>1</sup> worshippers—those who answer to the idea of worshippers, those who actually draw near to the Father in living fellowship and affectionate appreciation of his eternal Name—shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. An old misreading of this text, accepted by some Fathers, and based upon the idea expressed in ch. xvi. 13, has found expression in the Sinaitic

Codex, “in the spirit of the truth.”<sup>1</sup> But “spirit” here does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but to the spirit of man—that part of man’s constitution through which he most especially bears the image of God; and with which the Divine Spirit deals, and in which he dwells (Rom. viii. 26). The worship in spirit is worship contrasted with all mere carnal concomitants, all mere shadows of the good things to come, all mere ritual, all specialties of place, or time, or sacrament, or order. It need not be in despite of a genuine reverence for days, or seasons, or postures, or washings, but in absolute independence of them, and they, without this, will be actually valueless. *And in truth*; i.e. as dealing with reality, the adequate and veracious expression of genuine desires and veritable emotions; *καὶ γὰρ, nam et* (ver. 9). For indeed also the Father seeketh such to be his worshippers. Luthardt and Meyer differ as to the emphasis. Meyer insists that the *καὶ γὰρ* lays stress on the word which immediately follows, and he refers to 1 Cor. xiv. 8 as not contradicting the rule. He would render, “For the Father also on his part seeketh,” etc. Luthardt says that the new thought is to be found in *ἡντιν*, and therefore upon this the emphasis is laid. Westcott, by many passages, such as Matt. viii. 9; xxvi. 73; Mark x. 45; Luke vi. 32, etc., urges that *καὶ γὰρ* “alleges a reason which is assumed to be conclusive from the nature of the case.” The whole sentence is therefore covered by the expression, “For the Father also on his part seeketh those as worshippers of him who worship him in spirit and in truth.” A slight contrast is felt between the regimen of *προσκυνεῖν* with accusative, here again introduced, following upon that with dative in the first clause. Moulton would render the first clause, “offer worship to the Father,” and the second by “worship him.” The Father is now seeking, by the ministry of his Son, by the gift of his Spirit, for those who approach him with deeply felt need and true affection, in spirit, not in ceremony, in truth, not in hypocritical or heartless profession. This is another indication of the high truth taught in the prologue (ch. i. 4, 9; iii. 21; xviii. 38, see notes) that there are vast differences among men, even anterior to their reception of the perfect revelation of the Father’s heart in Christ Jesus. “The life is the light of men.” There are those who “do the truth” and are “of the truth,” who “worship God in spirit and in truth.” The whole gospel dispensation is a search for these.

Ver. 24.—A still more explicit and compre-

<sup>1</sup> See note on ch. i. 9 for the difference between *ἀληθής* and *ἀληθινός*.

<sup>1</sup> *Ἢ* reads, *ἐν πνεύματι ἀληθείας*.

hensive reason is given for the previous assertion, based on the essential nature of God himself in the fullness of his eternal Being. God is Spirit (*Πνεῦμα δ Θεός*; cf. ch. i. 1, *Θεός ἦν δ Ἀόγος*),—the article indicates the subject, and the predicate is here generic, and not an indefinite; therefore we do not render it, "God is a Spirit". The most comprehensive and far-reaching metaphor or method by which Jesus endeavoured to portray the fundamental essence of the Divine Being is "Spirit," not body, not *σάρξ*, not *κόσμος*, but that deep inner verity presented in self-conscious ego; the *substantia* of which mind may be predicated, and all its states and faculties. The Father is Spirit, the Son is Spirit, and Spirit is the unity of the Father and the Son. St. John has recorded elsewhere that "God is Light," and "God is Love." These three Divine utterances are the sublimest ever formed to express the metaphysical, intellectual, and moral essence of the Deity. They are unfathomably deep, and quite inexhaustible in their suggestions, and yet they are not too profound for even a little child or a poor Samaritaness to grasp for practical purposes. If God be Spirit, then they who worship him, the Spirit, must by the nature of the case, must by the force of a Divine arrangement, worship him, if they worship him at all, in spirit and in truth. The truth which our Lord uttered was not unknown in the Old Testament. From Genesis to Malachi, in the Psalms, in the historical books, in Judges, Samuel, and Kings, the Spirit and the spirituality of God are presupposed; but the Lord has generalized these teachings, cited them from darkness and neglect, combined them in one eternal oracle of Divine truth. The Galilean Peasant has thus uttered the profoundest truth of ethic and religion—one which no sage in East or West had ever surpassed, and towards which the highest minds in all the ages of Christendom have been slowly making approach. Forms, postures, ceremonial, sacraments, liturgies, holy days, and places are not condemned, but they all are inefficacious if this prime condition be not present, and they can all be dispensed with if it be. Only the *spirit* of man can really touch or commune with the Spirit of spirits, and the history of the new dispensation is the history of a progress from forms to realities, from the sensuous to the spiritual, from the outward to the inward, from the earthly to the heavenly.

Vers. 25, 26.—(c) *The Christ as conceived by Samaria.*

Ver. 25.—We probably do not possess here the whole of the conversation. It is clear, however, that strange presentiments of something more precious than any sanctuary, or any ritual, dawned upon the Samaritan

woman. "A prophet" might tell her and her people *where* men ought to worship. The Prophet she discovered answered a desire for the "where" by revealing the "how" they are to worship. But there are many other lessons they need, and she gives expression to an idea of the Messiah, and of his coming, which startles us by its boldness. The woman saith unto him, I know (*οἶδα*, I know as a matter of current opinion, and with intuitive certainty) that Messias cometh (which is called Christ). [This parenthetical clause by the evangelist is the explanatory translation into Greek of the Aramaic word. This must be so, unless we could be certain, with Hug, Diodati, and Roberts, that Jesus and the woman were speaking Greek to each other.] The woman turns from a theme which she has partially understood. How should a woman have been able at a moment to discharge and dispense with the traditions of a life, and the prejudices hoary with age? We know that the Samaritans anticipated One who should be a "converter," or "restorer" (Gesenius, 'Anecdota Samaritana,' p. 65, translates the Samaritan word *ܡܫܝܚܐ* by *converter* (so Ewald); Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Meyer, by *restitutor*), and cherished a hope of his appearance, upon the faith of the great promise (Deut. xviii. 15) that One would arise who would make known to them the Divine will. It is remarkable, but not unreasonable, that she should have adopted the Hebrew word in common use among all the Jewish people. In ver. 29 it is given in Greek without any reference to the original speech. Samaritans and Jews alike anticipated a *Christ* an Anointed One, a Plenipotentiary, a Guide. The more spiritual apprehension which follows becomes some explanation of the fact that our blessed Lord should have admitted to *her* what he afterwards, in Galilee, kept reticently in reserve. The Galileans would have come, on his slightest encouragement, and against his will have made him a king. This would have forced on him a position and dignity which, from their standpoint, would have wrecked his spiritual mission and frustrated his design. This woman, here and later on, made it obvious that her notion of the "Restitutor" or "Messiah" was One who, when he is come, will declare to us all things; in ver. 29 One who can read the secrets of the heart, and knows her and others altogether; while from ver. 42 we learn that she and her friends were anticipating there and then "the Saviour of the world." Luthardt here points back to Gen. v. 29 as part of the origin of the Samaritan idea.

Ver. 26.—Jesus saith unto her, I that am talking with thee am he. Jesus does utter to the Samaritan woman the truth about

himself which he withholds from the sensuous Galileans and the carping scribes. Throughout she is susceptible, inquiring, anxious for her own sake to know. The idea she entertained about Messiah would put no obstacle in the way of our Lord's admission, whereas the opposite idea, the passionate longing for a political revolution, led him to silence others, and even among his disciples to reserve the sublime fact as their sacred secret (cf. Matt. viii. 4; xvi. 20; xvii. 9; Mark viii. 30). The truth communicated to this woman was of supreme importance and of universal interest. Our Lord admitted his Messiahship, but of the deeper truths of his incarnation, of the nature of the birth from above, of the Divine life and love, of the means of redemption, and the principles of judgment, he says nothing. Nicodemus learns of both "earthly and heavenly things;" the Samaritaness receives some practical principles. Yet the two conversations are complementary to each other, and throw upon each other reciprocally floods of light. Moreover, there is the same parabolic speech in both; the same habit of mind. It is the same Teacher who uses "the wind" and "the water of the well" to illustrate great spiritual ideas.

Vers. 27—38.—(3) *Revelation and misunderstanding involved in the conduct of the disciples.* The next paragraph records the effects of this conversation upon the disciples, upon the woman herself, and upon her friends.

Ver. 27.—Hereupon his disciples came; they returned, *i.e.* those of them who had gone to Sychar, bringing their provisions and their ἄντλημα with them, and they marvelled<sup>1</sup> that he was talking with a woman. Such a proceeding was contrary to the etiquette of a rabbi, who contended that "a man should not salute a woman in a public place, not even his own wife" (cf. Lightfoot, Edersheim, Wettstein). One of the daily thanksgivings was, "Blessed art thou, O Lord . . . who hast not made me a woman" (Westcott). Yet (adds the eye-witness, one intimately acquainted with the innermost sentiments of the disciples) no one said, What seekest thou? Why talkest thou with her? They looked on with awe and reverence as well as wonder. They wondered whether he lacked aught which they could not supply. They marvelled (or, if we take the R.T., they kept marvelling) at the unwonted scene, that One so great as their Rabbi and Master should condescend to

teach or converse with a woman at all; but they held their peace, with the conviction that what he did must be gracious, holy, and wise. One of the miracles of the Lord's ministry was to break down the wretched rabbinical prejudice against the spiritual capacities of woman, and the Oriental folly which supposed that she contaminated their sanctity. He lifted woman to her true position by the side of man. Women were his most faithful disciples. They ministered unto him of their substance. They shared his miraculous healing, feeding, and teaching. They anointed his feet, they wept over his agony, they followed him to the cross, they were early at the sepulchre. They greeted him as the risen Lord. They received the baptism of the Spirit. In Christ there is neither male nor female. Both are one in him.

Vers. 28, 29.—The woman then (*i.e.* in consequence of the arrival of the disciples) left her water-pot (ἀφῆκε); left it to itself, forgot the object of her visit to the well, so engrossed was she with the new teaching, so amazed with his revelations; or perhaps, with womanly tact, left it that the disciples might, if they would, make use of it for their Master. Most commentators suggest that she left it, intending by the very act to come back again shortly for water. But this is scarcely the idea conveyed by ἀφῆκε. Archdeacon Watkins truly says that this notice "is a mark of the presence of him who has related the incidents." And she went her way to the city—probably beyond her home (see note, ver. 7), constituting herself at once the messenger and missionary of the new Teacher and Prophet, who had declared himself to be the Messiah—and saith to the men whom she found in the market-place or highway, Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did.<sup>1</sup> This exaggeration of the self-revelation was due to the deep conviction of her mind that the Prophet had read her whole life—its weakness and its follies, and it may have been its sins and crimes, not unknown, alas! to others as well. Chrysostom says, "She might have said, 'Come and see One that prophesieth;' but when the soul is aflame with holy fire it looks then to nothing earthly, neither to glory nor to shame, but belongs to one thing alone, the flame which consumeth it." There is a touch of naïveté, of loquacity, of impetuous womanhood, about this, that thrills with life. She was not afraid, in the first gush of her new-found joy, to brave the

<sup>1</sup> T.R. reads ἐθαύμασαν, with E, S, U, V, and the cursives; but Revised Version, Tischendorf (8th edit.), with A, B, C, D, G, etc., Italic, Vulgate, Æthiopic, read ἐθαύμαζον.

<sup>1</sup> A, B, C\*, Revised Version, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, with Italic and Coptic, read εἰ, instead of σοα of T.R., with A, C\*, D, and very numerous quotations and versions, with Alford, Tregelles (margin).

unflattering scorn of the men to whom such a confession was made; and then, in most natural and appropriate fashion, added, **He is not however the Christ, is he?** The question, by its form, suggests a negative answer; "but," Westcott says, "hope bursts through it (cf. Matt. xii. 28)." She knows that he **is** the Christ, but she wishes the townspeople to guess it—to come to a like conclusion with herself.

Ver. 30.—They went out<sup>1</sup> of the city, and were coming on their way towards him. The vividness of the picture is remarkable, and is made more so by observing the tense of ἤρχοντο. The men were already crossing the green fields that lay between Sychar and Jacob's well. This remarkable touch explains the conversation that immediately follows. We have the twofold scene depicted: on the one side, the disciples eager for their meal, and absorbed for the moment with thoughts of "terrene provender," unconscious of the vast yearnings of their Lord, and his passion for the regeneration and saving of men; and on the other side, the immediate effect, produced neither by signs nor wonders, but by his word only, on a few susceptible souls, who appeared to him living representatives and firstfruits of a redeemed humanity.

Ver. 31.—In the mean while (χρόνῳ understood)—while the men of Sychar were coming across the green corn-fields in excited and eager longing for the bread of life and the water of life eternal—his disciples besought him; rather, *were entreating him*—the verb ἐπαιδάω is used for question and interrogation, and is generally used of one who feels on terms of equality with the person addressed on the matter in hand (cf. ch. xiv. 16; xv. 7; xvi. 19, 23; xvii. 15, for its distinctness from αἰτέω)—saying, Rabbi, eat. Have we not gone to Sychar to find provisions for thee? Do not despise our effort.

Ver. 32.—But he saith to them, I have food to eat that ye know not; of which you are ignorant, but which you may come to know by-and-by. Βρῶσιν and βρῶμα are both used. The first denotes, strictly speaking, the act of eating; and the second the material for food; but they are, in Greek literature, generally used almost interchangeably. There were Divine desires and sacred satisfactions which discriminated the Lord's consciousness from that of his disciples. Thoma refers to the mighty fasts of the great lawgiver and prophet as the literary antecedent of this significant event; but this superiority to food is true of every great soul. The men of the spirit are consumed with

desires which dwarf the desires of the flesh, and they forget to eat their bread. Nor can we forget that the synoptic narrative places the forty days' fast in this very epoch of Christ's life, chronologically speaking. (See note at end of this chapter.)

Ver. 33.—Therefore the disciples (almost as obtuse as was Nicodemus, or the Samaritaness, or as the Jews generally were, in penetrating the hidden meaning of the Lord's words) unintentionally illustrate the parabolic method, the tissue of symbolic and metaphoric phrase which Jesus adopted throughout his ministry; they did not venture to question him further, but said one to another, **Hath any one brought him aught to eat?** Did that Samaritan woman or any other? They could not, or did not, rise to the spiritual or unseen, nor for the moment did they get beyond the pressing needs of the flesh. Still, in the form of their question they leave room for doubt, whether he had not been able to satisfy the craving of the flesh, to make stones into bread, or water into wine. *Surely not?* (The μήτις suggests a negative answer.)

Ver. 34.—Jesus said to them, My food—that which satisfies my strongest desire, and quenches all other desire—is that I may do continuously<sup>1</sup> the will of him that sent me on my mission to this people and to this world. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," was the motto and burden of his life. "Not my will, but thine," was the sacrificial cry which redeemed the world. To teach man to do the will of the Father is the motive which sustained him, and the prayer he put upon human lips was, "Thy will be done." Meyer here rightly says that *ἴνα* is not equal to *ἵνα*. Some expression is given by it as to the end and purpose of the mysterious life of which we have these sacred illustrations. The doing of the will of God is a perpetual and sublime activity, a continuing, ceaseless purpose; while the completion of the work will be one consummating act, towards which all the daily doing of the will is a preparation, and of which, in some sense, every day we discern a prelibation and forthshadowing. In ch. xvii. 4 he says, τελεῖσθας, "having completed the work thou," etc. This passage

<sup>1</sup> Οὐδὲν is omitted by modern editors; it is found in N, A, and in 1, 33, but all the other uncials omit it.

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Meyer do not accept, with Revised Version and Westcott and Hort, ποιῶσιν in place of ποιῶ. The authority for T.R. here is very strong, N, A, Γ, Δ, etc., with numerous quotations; while ποιῶσιν, though read by B, C, D, etc., and quotations, is more likely to have been the correction with the view of bringing it into more apparent harmony with τελεῖσθας, but the beauty of the two tenses would thus be lost.

points on to that (cf. also ch. v. 30; vi. 38; vii. 18; viii. 50; ix. 4; xii. 49, 50; xiv. 31, etc.).

Ver. 35.—Say not ye—has not your talk with one another been, as you have passed through the springing corn, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh the harvest? This cannot be a proverbial expression for the time which elapses between sowing and harvest, as some (Lücke and Tholuck) have supposed, because, firstly, there is no mention of sowing at all; and secondly, because *six* months was the customary period between seed-time and ingathering; and also because the “say not ye?” would then be inappropriate. I cannot doubt that it was a chronological hint that the time at which Jesus spake was four months from either the barley or wheat harvest. These harvests generally occurred between the middle of March and the middle of April. The time must, therefore, have been either the middle of November or of December. Tristram (Westcott) says the (wheat?) harvest began about the middle of April and lasted till the end of May. This would bring the time forward another month. This makes our Lord to have spent some eight months since the Passover, either in Jerusalem or in the Judæan land, on his earliest mission, which as yet had brought no obvious results. Men had come to his baptism, but had not appreciated or accepted his claims. The faith already awakened had been of the evanescent character, based on “signs,” outward not inward, a “milk faith,” to which he did not entrust himself (ch. ii. 24). Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; they are whitening unto<sup>1</sup> harvest. Our Lord now uses another metaphor—he bids the disciples glance across these rich corn-fields, to observe the obvious effect already produced by the sowing of good seed in Samaritan soil. The people are flocking towards him. The harvest of souls is ripening, and it is great. You must wait four months before this springing corn will need the sickle. But I say unto you, The time is come. The kingdom is come. The reaper must prepare for instant service. Again, we have a note of personal identity between the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel and the Author of the parables of the sower and the harvest. The very rapidity with which he passes from the symbolism of *water* to the symbolism of *food*, and then to that of *seed-time* and

*harvest*, reminds us of One who “without a parable spake not.” The words so far have universal application in every age. The harvest has always been ripening. The word *λευκός* is used in this place only for the aspect of ripening corn. It has elsewhere the meaning of glittering, translucent whiteness, and perhaps it is used here for “dead ripe.” The golden grain in late summer becomes white, and this intensifies the force of the image. It seems to say, “These fields will be sacrificed, these fruits will be wasted, these souls will be lost, unless they are reaped and brought into the heavenly garner.”

Ver. 36.—Then partially dropping, or rather explaining, his metaphorical language, he added, Already he that reapeth receiveth wages; *i.e.* receiveth from the great Owner of all souls the reward of fellowship with his purpose, and the recompense of entering into the supreme joy of the Lord of the harvest. The disciples might at once enter upon their harvesting. The work was itself “payment,” but it has a distinct aim beyond mere *μισθός*—he who reaps in this harvest of souls is gathering in fruit unto eternal life. The water that Jesus gives, the refreshment of soul he is able to supply, becomes a well, a fountain, a river, an ocean of life, an eternity of blessedness; and now this fruit of souls, this harvest of saved men, is a Divine, eternal treasure, which the reaper houses in the garner of God. The final clause is introduced by *ἵνα*, which certainly suggests here the “contemplated result” rather than the end of this ingathering. The “end” would be greater and nobler than what is here mentioned; the result is that even the sower and also the reaper may rejoice together. Westcott here says that Christ does not speak of himself as “the Sower,” but as “the Lord of the harvest.” If it be so, the sowers of whom he thinks are all the preparatory processes, all the prophetic men, all the testifiers to the Light whose testimony was crowned in John, all the way by which Judæa, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth have been prepared for the kingdom of the Spirit; and they will all rejoice together with yourselves who now begin your harvest-joy. If so, the vista opens first into the long future of Christian enterprise, to be consummated at last in the heavenly world, where parted hands may meet again, and those who have never met before shall “clasp inseparable hands in joy and bliss in overmeasure for ever!” All this may be proleptically contained in the words, but the special force of them would be severed from the circumstances which manifestly gave birth to them. These seem to me to be, primarily, Christ’s own ministry of sowing on that very day.

<sup>1</sup> The transference of *ἄδην* from the end of ver. 35 to the commencement of ver. 36, in place of the *καί* there, is the marginal emendation of Revised Version, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and doubtfully adopted by Westcott, but not by Tregelles. The authorities are balanced.

The reaping of the harvest may begin at once, and so the Sower (the Son of God) and reapers who gather fruit unto life eternal may and will rejoice together.

Ver. 37.—For herein—in this harvest-field, already whitening before your eyes—is the word veritably realized—it finds an ideal illustration of its meaning—One is the sower, and another is the reaper. It belongs to all common experience in such things; the first stone is laid by one, the topstone by another. The toil and tears of the sower with the precious seed are often the reason why another returns with joy, bringing his sheaves with him. It is an *all-but* universal law. Children inherit the toil of their fathers. We all stand where the shoulders of the mighty dead have lifted us. Still, though one be the sower and another is the reaper in this Samaritan field, yet, since “already” the reaper is busy with the sickle, the sower and reapers may rejoice together. The law will be established on a grander scale by-and-by, when the great Sower, who is the Lord of the harvest, shall send forth all his reapers to their great enterprise, and he and they will rejoice together.

Ver. 38.—If this be the meaning, then, in the following verse, the whole conception of their relation to the past and dependence upon it is singled out for additional comment. I have sent you, and am now sending you, to reap that whereon ye have not toiled to weariness. The idea of sowing (*σπειρειν*) is now expanded to (*κομιαν*) exhausting toil; i.e. to all the laborious preparation of the soil for the seed, clearing of the forest, and ploughing on the rocky places, the cultivation of the jungle and fen. Much has been done by those who have gone before you. Others have toiled thus; their footmarks are red with blood, their tears have watered the earth, and ye have entered (*and are now entering*) into their toil. There is no limitation here to the cycles of work and suffering, of disappointment and apparent failure which have preceded you. The “others” is surely not a pleonasm for himself. He does verily associate with himself all his forerunners. This *κόρος* is far more than the mere sowing of seed or diffusion of truth, and they who have during many centuries contributed of their life to the creation of the state of mind which makes these people susceptible to the truth, have prepared the way of the disciples. In a fit place, and in the fulness of the times, he came. The disciples of Jesus, moreover, have always had a greater or less degree of pioneer work to do. The efforts of the missionary Church may be represented at all times as toiling as well as sowing. Each generation of labourers in the great field of love to man enters upon work and toil

which its precursors have originated. The Tübingen critics here, true to their theory of the origin of the Fourth Gospel in the second century, suppose that, by the “others,” Jesus is supposed to mean Philip the evangelist, and, by the “reapers,” Peter and John, who entered into his labours, in Acts viii. 15. Hilgenfeld thinks by the “others” was meant Paul, and by the “reapers” the twelve apostles, who sought to enter upon his work and appropriate its fruit. Thoma has followed vigorously along the same lines, and supposes that the Pauline thought 1 Cor. iii. 6–8, and the story of the conversion of the Samaritans and of the heathen world to the Church, are here forthshadowed by the fourth evangelist.

Vers. 39–42.—(4) *The harvest of the Lord's sowing, and the Saviour of the world.*

Ver. 39.—This harvest is described in vers. 39–42. As this sublime discourse was proceeding, the impression produced by the word of the woman was becoming deeper. The breath of God was moving them mightily. They were prepared by a thousand untraceable influences for faith in the great Deliverer and Teacher. Many of the Samaritans from that city, in the first instance, had been summarily convinced of the presence among them of the long-looked-for Prophet, and believed on him by reason of the word (or, discourse) of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that I ever<sup>1</sup> did. Not merely is this one saying referred to, but the whole report of the words of Jesus of which that saying was the crowning or most startling expression. They are the first specimens of men who believe by the testimony of those who know. “Blessed are they who have not seen, but yet believe.”

Ver. 40.—They were already convinced; but they did more—they came to him. So when the Samaritans came to him, they continued asking him—they persistently prayed that he would abide with them. How unlike the treatment of Jews and Gadarenes, of scribes and Pharisees! There were some who besought him to depart from them, others who stoned him, Herodians and Pharisees who plotted to destroy him. But these hated Samaritans yearned for more of his fellowship, more of his words and searching glance, more of the Word of life. So-called heresy and heterodoxy may sometimes show itself more susceptible to the mind and Spirit of Christ than a bigoted and self-satisfied orthodoxy. The Lord responded to the request, and he abode there two days. Why should a biographer of the second century have limited this visit to “two days,” when it is obvious that he passes

<sup>1</sup> Nearly the same authorities read *α* for *ε*ρα, as in ver. 28.

over months in silence? It would have been as easy to say "two months" as to say "two days," and, to ordinary human judgment, more natural. These "two days" left an ineffaceable memory on the heart of one at least of these disciples, and the mention of it has upon the face of it the mark of historicity.

Vers. 41, 42.—And very many more believed, during that visit, by reason of his word—Christ's own word. We know not what the word was, but the specimens which John has recorded make us certain that torrents of living water flowed from his lips. He was moving in the full power of the Spirit. He was unveiling the nature of that "salvation" which was, as he said, "from the Jews;" but a salvation which affected and was adapted to the whole world. And they (*repeatedly*) said to the woman (the play of aorist and imperfect tenses throughout this passage is very noteworthy). No longer do we believe by reason of thy speaking. The word *λαλῶ* does not generally connote so serious a meaning as *λόγος*. The first word is used for "utterance" pure and simple (Matt. xxvi. 73), and for the inarticulate voices of lower creatures as well, while *λόγος* and *λέγειν* never have the latter meaning; but still *λαλῶ* is used in classical Greek for "discourse," and in ch. viii. 43 is used by Christ of his own "utterance." Meyer says the term is purposely chosen from the standpoint of the *speaker*, while in ver. 39 *λόγος* is used of the same *λαλῶ* by St. John as narrator. The above are the only times the term is found in the New Testament. For we have ourselves heard, and we know—fully, by personal intuition (we might have expected *ἐγγινώσκον* here)—that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.<sup>1</sup> This sublime description only occurs in one other place in the New Testament (*viz.* 1 John iv. 14), and here it falls from the lips of a Samaritan. There is no improbability that it should have expressed the thought of Samaritans, for they entertained wider and less nationalized views than did the Jews. Baur's notion, that the author wished to contrast heathen or Gentile susceptibi-

lity with Jewish narrowness and reserve, is out of keeping with the facts. A genuine heathen would have been as easy to *invent* as a susceptible Samaritan. "The Saviour of the world" is one of the noblest and most accurate terms in all the Bible to denote the work of Christ. It is the outcome of a discourse and of teaching which led men to the idea of spiritual and sincere worship of the Father, which searched for moral conditions rather than orthodox ritual, which demanded purity of life more than outward observance, and treated doing the will and work of the Father as more indispensable than necessary food. We need not be surprised (Acts viii.) to find the outcome of this sojourn of the Divine Lord among the misunderstood and hated Samaritans. The effort of the Tübingen school to find in this narrative an idealization of the synoptic tradition of Christ's special beneficence towards the Samaritans is very unfortunate, because, in Matt. x. 5, the "twelve" were forbidden to enter into cities of the Samaritans, and advised to occupy all their energies in evangelizing the cities of Israel. The record of Acts viii. affords very slender basis for a corresponding enlargement. The narrative before us shows that, in answer to the receptivity of the Samaritans, the Lord made the richest and fullest and most explicit and immediate revelation of himself. The extension of the kingdom of grace to Samaritans, and their incorporation into the body of Christ, was arrested by the need of the visit of the apostles, by the magic and hypocrisy of Simon; of which there is not here the slightest trace.

Vers. 43—54.—8. *The commencement of the Galilean ministry.* We read the details of the Galilean ministry in the synoptists, who describe our Lord's public entrance, in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14). They are silent with reference to these earliest witnesses to his method and varied specimens of his work. Just as in the Revelation of St. John we have a proem, and a series of visions which rehearse the entire development of the kingdom and glory of the Lamb of God until the day of his triumph, his wrath, and his great glory; so in these earlier chapters of the Fourth Gospel we have an anticipation of the entire ministry of Messiah. Specimens and illustrations are given of his creative might, of his purifying energy, of his forecast of the cross, of his demand for inward and radical renewal of his promise and gift of life. We can read in these events his principles of judgment and his

<sup>1</sup> *ὁ Χριστός* does occur in some manuscripts, Kand 116. Tischendorf (8th edit.) introduces *ἀληθῶς*, on very small authority; but Tregelles, Lachmann, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and Revised Version omit *ὁ Χριστός* of T.R., which has sixteen uncial manuscripts and many cursives and some Fathers in its favour, on the authority of S, B, C, etc., Italic, Vulgate, Coptic, and quotations by Origen, Irenæus, and Hieron. Godet here admits that it is more easy to account for the addition than for the rejection of *ὁ Χριστός*.



revelation of the Father, his mission to mankind as a whole, and his victory and drawing of souls to himself. We see, moreover, his relation to the theocracy and to the outlying world, to the learned rabbi and to the woman that was a sinner. We see the Lord in his glory and in his humiliation. A very brief hint is given in the following verses of the character of his Galilæan ministry, wherein mighty works and words alternate, and the first storm of direct opposition to him begins to make its appearance, upon which, while much light is cast by the narrative of ch. v., we have no indistinct trace in the synoptic narrative.

Vers. 43—45.—Now after the two days —i.e. the two days of our Lord's sojourn in Sychar (ver. 40)—he went forth<sup>1</sup> thence into Galilee. Here the author takes up the narrative of ver. 3. The delay in Samaria was parenthetical to the chief end of his journey, which was to leave Judæa and commence his ministry in Galilee. He now enters it a second time from Judæa. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. When therefore he came into Galilee, the Galilæans willingly received him, having seen all things whatsoever he did in Jerusalem, at the feast: for they themselves also went to the feast. These words bristle with difficulties, and hardly two commentators entirely agree in their interpretation of them. Christ's visit to Galilee is here accounted for by the principle embodied in the proverb, or *a part at least* of the proverb, which he used (according to the synoptic narrative) with reference to his visit to and reception in Nazareth, about this same period in his career. Apart from that reference, the most simple explanation of the quotation would be that our Lord regarded Jerusalem and Judæa as in one sense, and a very deep one, "his country," not simply his birthplace, and which he felt at twelve years of age was to contain his Father's house and kingdom and work; and of which he afterwards said, "O Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, . . . how oft would I . . . but ye would not!" The Fourth Gospel records our Lord's various Judæan ministries with such striking in-

cidents and impressive discourse, that his claim upon the loyalty of the metropolis was repeatedly urged and as repeatedly rejected. True that in vers. 1—3 we are told that our Lord left Judæa because the Pharisees, the influential religious party, were in a hostile sense comparing his ministry with that of the Baptist. This may only be another way in which the comparative unfruitfulness of his early ministry in Judæa is stated. "The prophet hath no honour in his own country." If this was the meaning of Christ's recurrence to the proverb, then we can understand the *ὅν* of ver. 45, as well as the *γὰρ* of ver. 44. The Galilæans who had been up to Jerusalem, and been favourably impressed—perhaps more so than any Judæans, having formed the bulk of those who received baptism at his hands—received him graciously on his entrance into Galilee. The whole passage thus would hang together; a subsequent and similar and more acute experience where he was best known by face, in Nazareth, drew from him an expanded form of the proverb, in sad and melancholy iteration, "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country, and amongst his kindred, and in his own house" (Mark vi. 4; Matt. xiii. 57). [In Luke's enlarged account of the visit to Nazareth (iv. 16—30), possibly an event which is perfectly distinct from the visit to his "own country" cited by Matthew and Mark, the proverb appears in its shorter form.] This interpretation is that preferred by Origen, Maldonatus, Wieseler, Baur, etc., formerly by Ebrard and Lücke, and now by Westcott, Moulton, and Plummer. In my opinion it is the most satisfactory and least encumbered interpretation. It does not seem satisfactory to Meyer and others, who urge that *πατρίς* can only mean what it obviously does in the synoptic narrative, viz. Galilee as represented by Nazareth. Meyer also interprets the *γὰρ* as introducing a reason, not only for our Lord's present return to Galilee, but for his *earlier departure from Galilee to Judæa*; and Meyer supposes that he must have uttered the words *then*. On this supposition, the Galilæans in the first instance must have failed to appreciate his prophetic claims. Christ had gone to Jerusalem and Judæa, and there acquired the fame of a prophet, and subsequently these Galilæans were ready to recognize it second hand, on the occasion of his return. Godet adds to this the joyful emotion that was felt when the plan of Jesus had been successful as far as the Galilæans were concerned. Moreover, he gives a pluperfect sense to *ἐμαρτύρησε*, "he had testified." Against this we observe that our Lord must have soon found that, in a narrower and closer sense, his

<sup>1</sup> Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν is omitted by Griesbach, Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, Revised Version, and bracketed by Lachmann, on the authority of N, B, C, D, 13, 69, Curetonian Syriac, Origen, etc. It is found in A, P, Δ, A, and numerous versions. The doubled verb would be contrary to the simplicity of John's style (Meyer).

nearest friends and neighbours had learned nothing by their journey to the feast; and that the author of the Fourth Gospel must have been ignorant of the kind of reception so soon accorded to our Lord at Nazareth. Brückner and Luthardt suppose by the *γὰρ* that Jesus either sought the struggle with his unbelieving compatriots or the solitude induced by the absence of sympathy. There is not the faintest trace of this in the narrative. Then, again, Cyril, Calvin, Bengel, Olshausen, Hengstenberg, suppose that by *παρὶς* is meant his own *city*, Nazareth, which is here contrasted with Galilee in general, including Capernaum, which became the missionary centre of his early ministry. These commentators suppose that, when we are told "he went to Galilee," it means (as we see from ver. 46) he went to Cana, "for he testified," etc.; and therefore that in this forty-fourth verse comes the tragic scene described in Luke iv. 16—30. Lange has supplemented this theory by another that removes part of the difficulty, viz. that by *παρὶς* was meant *Lower* Galilee, including Nazareth, and by the Galilee of ver. 44 was meant *Upper* Galilee and the neighbourhood of the lake, including Capernaum, to which we find that, after his cruel treatment at Nazareth, he retired. So Geikie. Now, there are difficulties in either of these views, which give great awkwardness to the expression, "So he came to Cana again," in ver. 46. Tholuck, De Wette, Lücke, in various ways, urge that the *γὰρ* of ver. 44 may mean *namely, that is to say, etc.*, pointing onwards to the kindly reception which the Galileans gave him being due to the *signs* which they beheld, and not to the words of life which he had spoken. Every view seems to us far-fetched and inconsistent, with the exception of the first interpretation. The only objection that is at all urgent, arises from the fact that, in the synoptic narrative, Nazareth is spoken of as his country. But if this were so, we do but see in the reception accorded to him in Nazareth a further illustration of the very same spirit which was shown to him in the metropolis. In both places "he came to his own, and his own received him not." There is nothing improbable, if so, that in both places Jesus should have appealed to the homely proverb. On the second occasion he added to it, "his kindred and his home," as well as "his country."

Ver. 46.—He<sup>1</sup> came therefore again unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. The *ὅν* of this verse is best ex-

<sup>1</sup> T.R., with numerous cursives, here reads *δ' ἡγεσθός*, but the words are omitted by all modern editors.

plained by the simple supposition that Cana lay in his way. In Cana of Galilee, not Judæa, he had manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him. He came, then, to Galilee, to Cana, and for a while tarried there, long enough for the *βασιλικός* to have heard of his healing power and prophetic gifts. There have been numerous attempts to identify this narrative of the nobleman's son with the healing of the centurion's servant as recorded in Matt. viii. 5 and Luke vii. 2. Recently Weiss and Thoma have laid emphasis upon this identification. Strauss, Baur, and all the opponents of John's Gospel, are eager to press this subjective handling of the synoptic tradition. But, as Edersheim has observed, they are here in hopeless contradiction with their own theory; for we find that the Hebrew Gospel here confers the loftiest encomium upon a Gentile, and the Hellenic Fourth Gospel makes the hero of this scene to be a Jew. True, in both cases a man of higher rank than that of fishermen and taxgatherers approaches our Lord with a request on behalf of another. But it should be observed that in the one case we have a Roman centurion, a heathen man, coming with great faith, one who, though "not in Israel," recognizes the imperial claims of Jesus; in the present narrative we have an Herodian officer, some person of Jewish blood attendant on the tetrarch's court, who displays a weak faith, reproved though rewarded by the Master. The one asks for a dying slave afflicted with paralysis; the other for a dying son suffering from deadly fever. Jesus meets the centurion as he comes down from the mountain, after the delivery of the great sermon; the Lord, when he receives the request of the nobleman, was a resident in Cana. Both cures are said to take place at Capernaum by the utterance of a word, but the centurion disclaims the right to a visit, and asks for a word only. The nobleman entreats that the Lord would travel from Cana to Capernaum to heal his son. Thus the two narratives, with certain resemblances, are still strongly contrasted. The *βασιλικός* is one in the service of a king. The title of a king was given to Herod in later times (Mark vi. 14), and characterized other references to him. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

Ver. 47.—This man, when he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, went unto him. This statement implies that Jesus had been in Capernaum before, and left there the impression of his power to heal and save. The rumour of transactions of this kind wrought at Capernaum had been carried from Capernaum to Naza-

roth (see Luke iv.), and now the return of Jesus from Judæa was soon known in the cities along the shore of the lake. And he besought him (*obs. ἡρώτα*, indicating to some extent a kind of conscious right to seek the favour) that (*ἦν*, in John, often gives the purport of a prayer or a command) he would come down (from the highlands of Galilee to the borders of the lake, sunk as it is in a deep depression) to Capernaum, and heal his son: for he was on the point of death (*Vulgate, incipiebat mori*; compare and contrast ch. xii. 33).

Ver. 48.—Then said Jesus to him—as representing the whole class whose faith rested upon, and was nourished by, the outward sign, with a certain amount of reproof if not of irony in the strength of his phrase—Except ye see (there is no special emphasis laid on the *ἴδωτε*, as distinct from the mere report or testimony of such things) signs and wonders, ye will by no means believe. This is the only occasion in John's Gospel where these two terms are conjoined. They are frequently brought together in Acts (ii. 22, 43; iv. 30; v. 12, etc.), and used in conjunction in Matt. xxiv. 24; Mark xiii. 22; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12. John ordinarily uses (*ἔργα*) "works" to denote those objective tangible facts which were "signs" (*σημεῖα*) of the Lord's higher nature and claims. Here *τέρατα*, a word meaning "portents," remarkable, inexplicable events out of the common order, accompanies "signs," to complete the notion. The craving for "signs and wonders" did absorb the higher life of Judaism. "The Jews require a sign" (1 Cor. i. 22), and minds that are yet in the Jewish stage of partial discipline, for spiritual revelation, still do the same. There is still in many of us the weak faith which needs the stimulating diet of the "sign" before there is any full recognition of the Divine fullness of blessing. Christ does not condemn, though he mourns over, this spiritual babyhood; and while he says (ch. x. 38; xiv. 11; xv. 24) that belief for the works' sake may lead up to true faith, yet the language addressed to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," reveals his deepest thought of their comparative worth. The demand for "signs and wonders" in Galilee contrasts with the ready reception which the Samaritans had given to his word. Many of the difficulties of these narratives arise from the obvious fact that they are so closely compressed. Weiss has a hard task to make what he calls this "harsh answer" tally with Matthew's account of the reception of the centurion, and of the "great faith" which in his case preceded the miracle. A single sentence in the urgent request of the nobleman, implying that at Capernaum they

needed the same kind of proof that had been given at Jerusalem of the Lord's prophetic claims, would account for all the emphasis laid upon the imperfect faith of the Galileans. He who "knew what was in man" knew in what way to rouse in this suppliant an adequate recognition of the Divine in himself.

Ver. 49.—The nobleman saith unto him, Lord, come down before my little boy (my only son) die (comp. Mark ix. 24, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief;" and, again, the words of the woman of Syro-Phœnicia, who will not be put off, "Even the dogs eat of the crumbs," Matt. xv. 27, etc.). This touching stroke shows how love triumphs over the desire for signs and wonders, and already helps to create the faith in the grace and power of the Divine Helper.

Ver. 50.—Jesus saith to him, Go on thy way; thy son liveth. The use of the diminutive *παιδίον* in the previous verse is not sustained by Codex A, which reads *υἱόν*, while N reads *παῖδα*. Jesus adopts in his gracious response the more dignified word which had been already on the lips of the father. He did not "need the passionate appeal" (Moulton). The rationale of the miracle is impossible. The will of Jesus was in absolute coincidence with the Divine will, and he knew, by the inward conformity of his own will with the Father's will, that what he willed the Father willed, and that at the very moment the crisis of the fever had passed and the change was wrought. On this occasion he did not say, "I will come and heal him," but, "Go; thy son liveth;" he is no longer, as thou thoughtest, on the point of death. The man was fain to believe the word of Jesus, and for a while at least, to believe by that alone. The man believed the word which Jesus spake to him, and went on his way to Capernaum.

Ver. 51.—Now as he was going down to Capernaum (if we take any of the more recent determinations of the site of Cana (see ch. ii. 1, 2), this means that he had traversed a distance of between twenty and twenty-five miles, so that there is no reason to treat with ridicule or regard as inexplicable the time taken for the return journey, or that a night should have been spent in the transit from Cana), his servants met<sup>1</sup> him, saying,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ἐπήντησαν* is read by Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Revised Version, with N, B, C, D, K, L, while the reading of T.R., *ἀπήντησαν*, is sustained by A, Γ, Δ, Λ, Π, other uncials, and several quotations by Origen, Chrysostom, and Cyril.

<sup>2</sup> This alteration of the text is considerable. First, Westcott and Hort, Revised Version, omit *καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν*, which is sustained

that his boy lived. The oblique form is certainly far more reasonable, less mechanical, and more likely to have been altered into the direct form by an incautious copyist from the previous verse, than to have constituted the original text. Note that Jesus used the most dignified title, "son" (*υἱός*); the father employs the tender diminutive (*παῖδιον*); while the servants use the domestic term (*παῖς*).

Ver. 52.—The father is full of joy at the blessed intelligence, but naturally seeks at once to link the event with the word and will of Jesus. He therefore inquired from them the hour in which he began to amend (*κοινώ-τερον ἔσχε*). (This peculiar phrase is suitable on the lips of a man of rank; literally, "he did bravely, exceedingly well;" and *κοινῶς ἔχειν* is occasionally used in contradistinction with *κακῶς ἔχειν* in a similar sense. Epictetus, 'Diss.,' iii. 10—13.) They say to him, therefore, Yesterday during the seventh hour the fever left him. The advocates of John's adoption of the Roman computation of time suppose that this was *seven p.m.*, and, therefore, that a night had intervened on the return journey (so Westcott, Edersheim, and Moulton). This is not necessary, because, even on the Jewish computation, from sunrise to sunset, though the seventh hour must then mean between noon and one p.m., it could not have happened that much before midnight he should have broken into the streets of Capernaum. At that hour the noon *might* be spoken of as "yesterday." This, however, is not imperative; for, if the distance between Capernaum and Cana was from twenty to twenty-five miles, and if the nobleman had travelled to Cana on the day that he presented his request, it is clear that a night's halt might easily have been required. Baur and Hilgenfeld make the note of time an attempt on the part of the writer to exaggerate the marvel, as if the distance through which the will of Christ asserted itself could augment the wonder, or that the real supernatural could be measured by mile-stones. And Thoma thinks so poorly of the originality of the Johannist, that he imagines him to have worked into his narrative some of the small details of the Cornelius and Peter interviews in Acts x.

Ver. 53.—The father then knew (came to know, by putting the facts together) that his son began to amend in the same hour in which Jesus said to him, Thy son liveth. The word was mighty, none other than that very voice of the Lord "which healeth all our diseases," and "redcemeth our lives from

destruction." No mere coincidence, no common accident. And himself believed and his whole household; believed in the Divine claims of Jesus. This is the earliest mention of "household faith" (cf. Acts x. 44; xvi. 15, 34). In this case a whole picture rises before our eye. The mother, the sisters, the servants, the entire family, had shared in the anxiety, had sympathized in the journey to Cana, and now accepted the exalted claims of Jesus. Faith is graciously contagious. The nearness of the unseen world often reveals the features of the God-Man. The suggestion has frequently been hazarded that this βασιλικός was Chuza, the house-steward of Herod, whose wife, Joanna, ministered to Jesus (Luke viii. 3 and xiv. 10).

Ver. 54.—This is again a second sign which Jesus did, when he had come out of Judæa into Galilee. The point is that each return from Judæa to Galilee had been charged with special emphasis by the occurrence of a "sign." We are told (ch. ii. 23; iii. 2) of signs wrought in Jerusalem, and, consequently, it could not be meant to be the second sign wrought by him. The *πάλιν* refers to the *ἐλθὼν* clause, i.e. to the repetition of his entrance on work in Galilee. The first sign was the transformation of the water; the second, under similar conditions, was the healing a dying child by his word (so Godet, Lange, and Westcott).

This passage of St. John's Gospel which we have now reviewed is a distinct period of our Lord's life and ministry, concerning which the synoptists were silent; and it is marvellously complete in itself. It is an epitome of the whole life of the blessed Lord, and presents an outline and specimen of his method and his work. The disciple unnamed seems always at the side of the Lord. A mighty spell had fallen on him; and he was beginning already to discern in him the characteristics which ultimately directed him to compose the prologue. The penetration of the hidden secrets of all hearts—first his own, then those of Cephas and Nathanael, and the motives of Mary, and the spirit of Nicodemus, the intentions of the Pharisees, the secret life of the Samaritaness, and the inchoate and imperfect faith of the nobleman. Jesus is presented to us in marvellously different, yet mutually complementary, relations. (1) Gathering susceptible spirits to himself, and judging men by the reception they were giving or not giving to his word; e.g. Nathanael, Nicodemus, the Jews, the

by A, B, C, D; Tischendorf (8th edit.) substitutes for it *καὶ ἡγγεῖλαν*, with N, D; and they all add *λέγοντες*, omitted by N, D, and *αὐτοῦ* for *σου*, with N, A, B, C.

Samaritans, the Galileans. (2) Accepting or revealing the mightiest and most enduring names—"The Son of God," "the Lamb of God," the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, "the King of Israel," the Opener of the kingdom of heaven, the Creator of all things, the Head of the theocracy, the Rebuilder of the temple of his body, the Teacher of the teacher of Israel, the "Son of man," the Saviour, the Giver of eternal life, the Light, the Bridegroom of the true bride, the Object of the eternal Father's love, the Revealer of the Father in his most essential features and most perfect will, the "Prophet that should come into the world," the "Saviour of the world," the "Christ of God." (3) We see him, in the majesty of his omnipotence, hiding himself, as the Almighty always does, behind and in his works; we see him hallowing and heightening the joys of nuptial love, and again purifying the house of God from all contaminating adjuncts; we see him in his exalted mood consumed by holy zeal, and also weary and thirsty by the well, asking for water from an alien, and making to her the most astonishing revelations, hushing the pride, as they have secured the reverence, of all after-ages by their spirituality and refinement. (4) We have specimens of every kind of reception and non-reception accorded to his teaching. Some at once perceive his extraordinary claims, and pour forth their homage; others are silent, and pass out of sight for ever. Some are cold and reserved, critical and puzzled; others glow and gush with instantaneous conviction. We see in these chapters the shadow of the cross, and gleams also of the crown of Jesus. (5) We have, moreover, remarkable forthshadowing of the immense human personality which is sustained, not only by what follows in this Gospel, but by what was well known and widely circulated when this Gospel was written, e.g. the impression which he spontaneously gave of reserves of power and truth. A necessity seems imposed upon him of speaking in parabolic, enigmatic language. He continually rises from the commonest incident and material to the Divinest truth; utilizing for his purpose the fig tree, the wine-cup, the temple courts and sanctuary, the roaring wind, the flowing

water, the rising corn, and the coming harvest.

One remarkable aspect of this preliminary ministry is the light it throws upon the profoundly difficult passage in the synoptics, descriptive of the temptation of Jesus—a subject on which this evangelist says nothing. Later on, indeed, he tells us that Jesus said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me;" and, "Now is the crisis of this world: now is the prince of this world cast out. And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me" (ch. xii. 31; xiv. 30). In these chapters the evangelist records certain events which correspond in a remarkable way with the threefold temptation of the devil, which we know to have preceded the public ministry in Galilee. Thus, (1) over against the devil's temptation to make stones into bread for his own sustenance, and as proof of his sonship to himself, we find that Mary his mother said to him, at the marriage-feast, "They have no wine." His reply was, "Not in the way which you propose will I make myself known to the world." "Mine hour [for that] is not yet come." He did, however, in a manner baffling to all but his disciples, turn water into wine for the behoof of poverty and the hallowing of earthly joy, and the manifestation, not so much of the glory of his power as of the fulness and sweetness of his love. Compare with this his asking for water from the well for his own refreshment as a weary, thirsting man, and also the spirit of his reply to his disciples, "I have meat to eat which ye know not of;" "My meat is to do the will of him who sent me." (2) Over against the devil's temptation to descend in splendid supernatural effect from the pinnacle of the temple upon the astonished multitude, trusting in the mean while to the hands of angels to hold him up, we have John's account of his sudden appearance in the temple, when, consumed by holy zeal for its purity, instead of loud acclaim, he encountered the first muttering of the storm which culminated on Calvary, and made it evident that he only looked to victory over their prejudices by eventually building up that temple of his body which they, by their obtuseness, were beginning to destroy. (3) Over against the temptation to win the powers of the world and the glory of them by a sinful compromise, i.e. by admitting the

legitimacy of the power of the devil in human polity, John tells us that Jesus, by uncompromising fidelity to his great mission as spiritual Healer, waved off the half-homage of the ruler of the Jews and master of the schools, and pointedly declared his need of personal, individual regeneration. Then we read that he quietly began his humble career of persuasion, that he grappled with and discarded the presumptuous claim of nationality, and announced the nature of spiritual worship. Not by the pomp of national homage won by truckling to the power of evil, but by the conversion of the simple hearts of Samaritans through their personal conviction that he was indeed the *Saviour* (not the *Cæsar*) of the world, he would win the world. Such obvious comparisons are not fortuitous. These events set forth, on a magnificent scale of converse and action, the deep lessons of the temptation, and show, as the synoptists tell us, that he was filled with the Holy Ghost (see Introduction).

Yet, notwithstanding all this, it was a great mistake to suppose that he had exhausted his resources or his teaching; he has simply uttered the alphabet of the whole gospel which he is about to disclose. The teaching of the valedictory discourse is prodigiously in advance of this introduction to his ministry. The truths absolutely revealed are the need of a complete purification of man and temple, the imperative necessity of heavenly birth, of spiritual worship, of implicit faith in the Father's love, and of patient waiting for God. We have two incidents of the Lord's ministry in Galilee, but also impressive hints of the adaptation of his gospel to that world of strangers and outcasts that he has come to seek and save. Our great difficulty is in the silence which the Fourth Gospel preserves concerning the continuous ministry of our Lord in Galilee after this preparation for it.

In ch. vi. 4 we learn that the Jews' Pass-

over was at hand, and we find ourselves in the midst of a group of facts in which some chronological hints may be gained. The multiplication of the loaves, the walking upon the sea, are events which are recorded by the synoptists, and which appear there to have followed the execution of John the Baptist, and the conclusion of the trial mission of the twelve disciples. We must, therefore, conclude that, between the Passover of ch. ii. 13 and ch. vi. 4, one year must have, at least, elapsed. (It is true that Browne, in his '*Ordo Sæculorum*,' has endeavoured to obliterate this reference to the Passover as a gloss, but without any authority from codices, or versions, or other diplomatic evidence.) This period, moreover, includes a vast amount of incident in the synoptic narrative; all that, *e.g.*, which is recorded in Mark between i. 14 and vi. 56. Now, it is obvious that, after a period of general response to his claims, our Lord encountered (according to the synoptists) an organized opposition from the Pharisees (see Mark ii., iii., and parallels, and especially from ii. 23 to iii. 6), in particular a bitter and deadly persecution on the ground of his heterodoxy of word and conduct with reference to the rabbinic interpretation of the sabbatic law. There are also other indications of a rising storm of indignation, even in Galilee, to modify the popular enthusiasm. Concerning this John says nothing, but he does record the origin of the storm in the metropolis in his account of a journey to Jerusalem taken in the course of this period. It was his obvious purpose to detail the history of the conflict with the hierarchical party at Jerusalem.

The metropolis was the great focus of the antagonism to Christ, and John describes those scenes which appeared in Jerusalem to have stimulated the assault, and thereby, elicited the self-revelation of Jesus.

## HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—6.—*The journey of our Lord through Samaria.* We are now to see the firstfruits of Gentile conversion.

I. CONSIDER THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S DEPARTURE FROM JUDÆA TO GALILEE. "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judæa and departed again into Galilee." 1. *The anger of the Pharisees was roused by the greater success of Jesus.* "All men were coming

to him" (ch. iii. 26), to be his disciples and to receive his baptism. John was now in prison. Nothing more was to be apprehended from the rousing ministry of the Baptist. But a more formidable Teacher had appeared in the land, who commanded a still wider acceptance. The fact that the Baptist had borne testimony to Jesus, and that our Lord was more independent of Pharisaic traditions in the spirit of his work, made him vastly more dangerous to the dominance of the leading religious party. 2. *It argued no cowardice on the part of Christ to leave Judæa in circumstances of danger.* He himself counselled his apostles to follow his example: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matt. x. 23).

II. THE NECESSITY THAT DIRECTED HIS ROAD THROUGH SAMARIA. "And he must needs go through Samaria." This was necessarily the direct route to Galilee, but was usually avoided through the particularistic spirit of the Jews, if not from an apprehension of Samaritan hostility. 1. *We remark how the hostility of the Pharisees in Judæa was overruled for the conversion of the Samaritans.* 2. *This visit of mercy to Samaria is not inconsistent with the original commission given to the apostles.* "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 5, 6). (1) The limitation in the commission is confined to that one mission only, for in the final commission (Acts i. 8) Jesus says, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth." (2) The commission recognizes merely the prior claim of the Jew in order of time. "To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." (3) The apostles needed to be gradually disciplined to more catholic ideas by the action of our Lord himself in inaugurating the mission to the Samaritans. (4) Consider how persistent Jesus was in well-doing. He has no sooner ceased to labour in Judæa than he resumes his task by the way to Galilee. Truly he "went about every day doing good."

III. THE SCENE OF HIS SAMARITAN LABOURS. "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph." 1. *The city is the modern Nablous, where the Samaritans still live.* 2. *The people were a mixture of five nations, transported from the East to occupy Samaria after the exile of its native inhabitants. They were more hated by the Jews than the Gentiles themselves, and were never received as proselytes. Hate begat hate. The moral separation was complete.* 3. *Jacob's well was the spot where the first word of grace was spoken to the Samaritans.* "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus upon the well." (1) Jesus was weary with travel in the heat of the day; for "it was about the sixth hour"—one o'clock in the day. (a) It was a mark of his poverty that he travelled on foot. (b) It was a mark of his true humanity that he had full experience of its infirmities. (2) Mark how Divine providence brings together the Saviour and the sinner at the "meeting-place of destiny." The woman comes to draw water; Jesus sits, a wearied traveller by the well, seeking the relief of his thirst.

Vers. 7—14.—*The conversation with the Samaritan woman.* I. THE FIRST APPROACH IS MADE ON OUR LORD'S SIDE. "Give me to drink." 1. *Consider the person addressed.* "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water." (1) It was a woman. Rabbinic prejudice discouraged the fuller religious instruction of woman, but Jesus trampled such a prejudice underfoot. It is interesting to notice that a woman was the first convert in Samaria, as Lydia was the first convert in Europe. (2) It was a Samaritan, "an alien from the commonwealth of Israel;" yet Jesus passed beyond the limits of Judaism in his errand of mercy. (3) It was a poor woman, for drawing water was no longer, as in more ancient times, the work of women of rank; yet Jesus preaches the gospel to the poor. (4) She was degraded. She was an adulteress; yet Jesus had mercy to offer to this sinner. 2. *Consider how he seeks to elicit her thought and to gain her soul.* He asks a favour. "Give me to drink." This was to recognize her momentary superiority.

II. THE QUICK RECOLLECTION ON HER SIDE OF THE WALL OF SEPARATION BETWEEN JEW AND SAMARITAN. "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" 1. *She identified Jesus as a Jew by his dress or his accent or by both.* 2. *Consider the embittering alienations wrought by religious differences.*

"For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Yet the Galilæans, like our Lord and his disciples, may have been less influenced by the policy of isolation than the people of Judæa, for while Jesus asked a drink from a Samaritan, his disciples went to a Samaritan city to buy meat. 3. *Mark the perpetuity of religious hatred.* It dated from the age of the Captivity. It still exists to separate Samaritans both from Jews and from Christians.

III. OUR LORD'S OFFER OF THE BEST GIFT TO THE SAMARITAN WOMAN. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." 1. *The gift of God is the living water*, as he who speaks to her is the Agent of imparting it to the soul of man. (1) The living water is eternal life (vers. 13, 14). (2) It is adapted to satisfy the thirst of the human soul for fellowship with God. (3) It is ever fresh, as it springs from an unfailing source (Gen. xxvi. 19). 2. *Mark how it is to be obtained.* "Thou wouldest have asked of him." It is by prayer—the prayer of faith. Some say that we are not to pray for salvation, but simply to believe in order to salvation. (1) But our Lord here sanctions prayer for it, and Peter enjoins it upon Simon Magus: "Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." (2) It is the duty of an unconverted man to pray, as it is his duty to believe. His unbelief is no excuse for the neglect of this duty. Why otherwise is the neglect of prayer charged as a sin (Zeph. i. 6; Hos. vii. 7)? (3) If a sinner takes salvation before he prays, and does so because he has not faith to pray, he is saved before he has faith. It is absurd, then, to counsel the sinner against praying because prayer implies faith, and yet to exhort him to take salvation which is impossible without faith. On such a principle a sinner can neither pray nor believe. 3. *Mark the cause of the sinner not receiving the gift of God.* "If thou knewest the gift of God." Ignorance of the worth of Christ is the great cause of the gift not being appropriated. The Samaritan woman has so little idea of the import of our Lord's words that she thinks only of the water of Jacob's well, and therefore our Lord has to set the truth in a new and striking light before her.

IV. THE TRUE NATURE OF THE LIVING WATER THAT IS IN CHRIST'S DISPOSAL. 1. *It satisfies more than mere momentary wants.* The water of Jacob's well would satisfy a thirst that would recur again. This living water would fully satisfy the thirst of the immortal spirit, and finally end the inward unrest. "Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Earthly satisfactions leave an emptiness in the soul which needs an ever-fresh supply from external sources. 2. *The living water is* (1) a well more inexhaustible than Jacob's well, for it is supplied by the fountain of God's grace. (2) It is a fountain leaping up in abounding plenty, so as to supply all the vast variety of human need. (3) It springs up to eternal life in its issue. "The fountain itself is Jesus glorified in the heart by the Holy Spirit."

Vers. 15—20.—*A serious turn to the conversation.* I. THE ARRESTED ATTITUDE OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN. "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither pass this way to draw." She is still ignorant of the meaning of his words, but she begins to have a dim apprehension of something behind them profoundly touching her life. We cannot otherwise understand the next phase of the conversation.

II. OUR LORD LIFTS THE VEIL FROM HER PAST LIFE, AND THUS REVEALS HIMSELF AS A PROPHET, AND MORE THAN A PROPHET. "Go, call thy husband." 1. *He desires to link with her in the coming blessing the man whose life was then unworthily linked with her own.* (1) He aims to purify family life. (2) He desires to make the regenerate family the nucleus of evangelistic effort. 2. *Mark the sincerity of her answer.* "I have no husband." It signifies that she was not wholly depraved, or that her heart had already begun to respond to the searching ordeal of Christ. There is sadness in the confession. 3. *The answer of Jesus lays bare the secrets of her past life.* "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." (1) She had probably lost her five husbands, not by death, but by her personal misconduct, as may be inferred from the circumstances of her present relation; for the Samaritans, unlike the Jews, allowed divorce for no other cause than adultery. (2) The conduct of Christ in this case suggests that (a) private sins are to be rebuked privately; (b) without passion or



severity; (c) and with a particular application of the Word to the conscience of the transgressor.

III. THE SINGULAR TURN WHICH THE WOMAN GIVES TO THE CONVERSATION. "Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." 1. *The words may have been spoken to parry the stroke at her conscience*, though she implicitly confesses her sin, and does not attempt to deny or excuse it. 2. *Yet her discovery of a prophet, who knows the depths of her soul, suggests the religious question that seems to have already occupied her mind* (ver. 25), and especially the question respecting the true worship of the Lord. 3. *She submits to our Lord the antagonism between Samaritan tradition and Jewish practice.* (1) Gerizim, which was the centre of Samaritan worship, dated its sacredness from the time of Nehemiah. Though it had an earlier history, it was dear to the Samaritans as the site of their worship for at least five hundred years. (2) She is fully aware of the exclusive claims of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem. (3) She looks to the Prophet, who has disclosed her inner life, to determine the rival claims of Gerizim and Jerusalem.

Vers. 21—24.—*The spirit of the true worship.* Our Lord acts a prophet's part in answer to her inquiries.

I. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE NEW WORSHIP. "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." 1. *All localized worship was soon to end.* (1) The Samaritan would no longer worship at Gerizim, nor the Jew at Jerusalem, as two centres of worship. (2) Nor would Jerusalem become the fixed centre of worship for all people through all time. Our Lord foresaw the coming destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and the desolation of Samaria itself. (3) The Christian dispensation knows nothing of holy places or shrines. The holiness of a Christian Church belongs, not to the place, but to the body of worshippers. Men are to lift holy hands in every place, from the rising to the setting of the sun (Mal. i. 11). (4) The hour for the establishment of the new worship was to date from the resurrection or the ascension of Christ. 2. *The fatherhood of God emancipates worship from every limitation of time and space.* Men will worship God as a Father. The title is characteristic of this Gospel. (1) God was the Father of all men by creation. "Have we not all one Father?" (Mal. ii. 10). (2) But he is specially the Father of all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). (3) The common fatherhood of adopting grace obliterates all distinctions of nation and custom and privilege. Jew and Gentile stand henceforth on a platform of equal priority.

II. THE OBJECT OF THE NEW WORSHIP. "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." 1. *The Samaritans were ignorant of God's character, though they worshipped God.* (1) It was said of their ancestors that "they knew not the manner of the God of the land." (2) They were themselves cut off from all the prophetic revelations after Moses, and especially from the more spiritual developments of Jewish history. Their relation was little better than a strictly legalistic monotheism. 2. *The Jews understood the character of the God whom they worshipped.* (1) There was no break in the continuity of historical revelation to the Jews, for they remained as pupils in God's school, though with varying fidelity, all the way from Moses to John the Baptist. The language implies their superior advantages as the possessors of a larger Bible. "Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2). (2) Mark the close connection that exists between the revelation of God's will and the possession of salvation. "For salvation is of the Jews." (a) The promises of salvation come to us through the Jews. (b) The means of salvation were revealed to them. (c) The Author of the salvation was a Jew, a descendant of Abraham and Son of David. (d) Hitherto the bulk of the saved were Jews.

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUE WORSHIP. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth." 1. *The characteristics of true worship.* (1) Spirituality, (a) as opposed to all carnal, Gentile ideas of God; (b) as opposed to the idea of a God worshipped in temples made with hands, or worshipped with carnal ordinances. (c) It signifies a worship in which the human

soul holds intimate communion with the Divine Spirit. Thus the Apostle Paul speaks of "the God whom I serve in my spirit" (Rom. i. 9), and of "praying in spirit" (Eph. vi. 18). Thus Christians are temples of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19). (2) Truth, (a) as opposed to the false worship of the Samaritans or the Gentiles generally; (b) as opposed to Jewish ordinances, which were but shadows without substance; (c) as distinguished from sincerity, for a false worship may be perfectly sincere. (d) It is a worship regulated (a) by the true ideas of the gospel; (b) by the manifestation which Christ has made of his Father's character. 2. *The ground or reason of this true worship.* "God is a Spirit." The worship must correspond to the nature of God. (1) He is a Spirit, without body, parts, or passions, therefore free from all the limitations of time and space. "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded!" (1 Kings viii. 27). (2) Believers ought to worship God truly because of his spirituality. (3) It is God's desire to be worshipped spiritually. "For the Father seeketh such to worship him." He is thus worshipped in a manner agreeable to his will and suitable to his nature.

Vers. 25—29.—*Our Lord's revelation of himself, and its remarkable effects.* The woman longs for fuller information.

I. HER PRESENT IDEA OF THE MESSIAH. "I know that Messiah cometh." 1. *She expected, like all the Samaritans, the advent of a Messiah*, according to the ancient prophecy, "God will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee" (Deut. xviii. 18). 2. *Her conception of his character and office entirely differed from that of the Jews.* "When he comes, he will tell us all things." She recognized him as a Prophet, not as a King. (1) Her idea was true, but incomplete; for Messiah possesses dominion as well as truth. (2) Her growing faith sees in him (a) an authoritative Expounder of truth, as the Greek word signifies; (b) and assigns no limits to the extent of his revelations.

II. OUR LORD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF ANSWERS TO THE RECEPTIVITY OF HER FAITH. "I that speak unto thee am he." 1. *He reveals himself to her as he never revealed himself to the Jews till the last moment* (ch. xvii. 3; Matt. xxvi. 64), because he saw that she was not subject to the dangerous illusions of the Jews. She did not ask, like the Jews, "If thou be the Messiah, tell us plainly" (ch. x. 24). 2. *It is the Lord's delight to reveal himself fully to those with an honest simplicity of heart,* who desire to know him.

III. THE WOMAN'S SILENT BUT EXPRESSIVE RESPONSE TO THE REVELATION. 1. *She made no answer to Jesus*, but her soul was immediately filled with a new hope, and her life took on a new interest. 2. *She communicated at once to her neighbours the substance of her own remarkable discovery.* "She left her water-pot," as a sort of pledge of her speedy return, "and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. This cannot be the Christ, can he?" (1) She becomes the missionary of Jesus to her countrymen, not to her husband only. (2) She is not ashamed to awaken painful memories of her own past life. (3) She believes more than her words imply, for her question suggests the affirmative answer of hope.

Vers. 31—38.—*Jesus and his disciples.* The surprise of the disciples at our Lord's talking with the woman at the well did not break forth into question; they rather resolved to bide their time for an explanation.

I. THE SPIRITUAL MEAT OF THE SON OF GOD. "My meat is to do the will of my Father, and to finish his work." 1. *The disciples were naturally anxious to supply his bodily wants*; for they knew that he was both hungry and thirsty. 2. *The interview with the woman had for the time put his physical wants in abeyance*; for he was filled with an extraordinary elation of spiritual joy. 3. *The delight of success had brought a new strength to his spirit.* "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The disciples did not then understand the true virtue or efficacy of this meat. 4. *As meat is pleasant to the appetite and refreshing to the body of man, so was it to Jesus to do the will of his Father.* The deeply suggestive phrase marks how natural and how easy was the obedience that Jesus rendered to the Divine will. (1) He did his Father's will (a) exactly, with all faithfulness; (b) with supreme wisdom and prudence; (c) with con-

stancy. (2) He finished his Father's work (a) in preaching the gospel; (b) in working miracles of healing; (c) in giving his life at last for his sheep.

II. THE RAPID RIPENING OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white to harvest." 1. *These words fix the time of this conversation.* As harvest occurred in the end of April, it must then have been about the middle of December. Jesus must, therefore, have remained eight months in Judæa. 2. *The spiritual harvest, which was in our Lord's mind, was obvious in the large body of Samaritans,* who were at that moment crossing the fields from Sychar to profess their faith in him. The thought of Jesus was the ripeness of the people to be gathered into the kingdom. 3. *This harvest is very rapid;* and the seed germinates and matures in an instant.

III. THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE SOWER AND THE REWARD OF THE REAPER. "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." 1. *The sowers are in this case John the Baptist and our Lord himself;* the reapers are the apostles, who are to receive these Samaritan disciples into the kingdom of God. 2. *The worker in this field has the prospect of reward;* for, besides being "a labourer worthy of his hire," he (1) has a special delight in the conversion of souls; (2) and will receive the crown of righteousness, and shine as the stars for ever and ever. 3. *The sower does not always live to see the fruit of his labour.* "And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth." (1) All God's servants are not to encounter the same difficulties, nor to meet with the same success. "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour"—the disciples had not laboured among the Samaritans at all—"other men laboured"—the Baptist and the Redeemer himself—"and ye are entered into their labours." The lesson would be fruitful of comfort as well as warning in the future history of the disciples. (2) Yet there is no room for complaint; for the work is the Lord's, not theirs; they are responsible for work, not for results.

Vers. 39—42.—*Jesus and the Samaritans.* The woman was the instrument of bringing her townspeople to the Saviour.

I. THE FIRST DEGREE OF SAMARITAN FAITH WAS DEPENDENT ON TESTIMONY. "Now many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him because of the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that ever I did." 1. *Faith is essentially the belief of testimony.* It thus depends upon evidence. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi. 1). 2. *The Samaritans were entitled to the higher blessing.* "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." We must receive the facts of the gospel history upon testimony, or we cannot receive them at all. 3. *Faith rests firmly upon testimony that is thoroughly verified by experience.* This Samaritan woman's experience ended all doubt.

II. THE FAITH OF THE SAMARITANS SOUGHT A CLOSER CONTACT WITH JESUS. "They besought him that he would tarry with them." 1. *Though faith rests on knowledge, it longs for fuller knowledge.* 2. *Though Jesus was a Jew, they sought immediate fellowship with him.* 3. *Their conduct is very different from that of the Jews,* who asked no such interview during his eight months' stay in their midst. 4. *Jesus complied with their request,* though he knew that it might involve him in the imputation of being a Samaritan (ch. viii. 48).

III. THE FAITH OF THE SAMARITANS WAS STRENGTHENED, AND MORE DISCIPLES WERE MADE, BY THE TWO DAYS' SOJOURN AT SYCHAR. "And many more believed because of his own word." 1. *They did not ask for signs, like the Jews* (ver. 48), *neither were miracles wrought for their benefit.* 2. *His word was effectual to confirm their faith:* it came to them, not in word only, but in power; for it was the power of God unto salvation. "For we have heard him ourselves." (1) This is the language of personal experience. (2) Their personal experience was final and satisfactory. "And know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." (a) Mark the absence of all narrow particularism. They knew from their Scriptures that in "Abraham and his seed all nations of the earth shall be blessed." Jesus might have brought this ancient promise under their notice. (b) They recognize Jesus no longer as a mere prophet, but as Redeemer. "Salvation may be of the Jews," but the Samaritans are the first to accept

it in the mass. (c) The faith of the Samaritans is the condemnation of the Jews' unbelief.

**Vers. 43—45.—Our Lord's return into Galilee.** He was now about to enter on the scene of his longest ministry.

**I. THE REASON OF HIS RETURN TO GALILEE.** "For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country." 1. *This might appear to be a reason for his avoiding Galilee, which was undoubtedly his own country.* 2. *He meant that, though he might have no reputation in Galilee, he could carry into it the reputation he acquired in Judæa and Jerusalem.* These places might be regarded as setting the fashion to Galilee by the high estimate they put upon his achievements. 3. *The proverb implies that a prophet, or any one who speaks in the name of the Lord, is entitled to special honour by virtue of his office.* He ought to receive (1) reverence, (2) obedience, (3) and maintenance.

**II. THE WELCOME OF THE GALILÆANS.** "The Galilæans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast." 1. *The Galilæans were not religious aliens in Palestine.* "For they also went unto the feast." (1) They were less prejudiced than the Jews of Judæa, and more accessible to religious instruction. (2) They were more patriotic than their southern countrymen. All the worst revolts against the Roman power had their origin in Galilee. 2. *The reason of the Galilæan welcome to Christ was the impression made upon them by the miracles at Jerusalem.* This fact marks their spiritual inferiority to the Samaritans, who believed on him for his word.

**Vers. 46—54.—The second miracle of Cana.** Our Lord is led to open his Galilæan ministry at the scene of his first miracle, at the spot where he had attached his first band of disciples more closely to himself.

**I. A FATHER'S PRAYER FOR HIS DYING CHILD.** "He besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death." 1. *The petitioner was a royal officer of the household of Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, probably Chuza, "Herod's steward," whose wife afterwards, in gratitude for her child's recovery, ministered to our Lord of her substance (Luke viii. 3).* 2. *It was affliction that brought him to Jesus.* Many persons never think of Christ till they are driven to him by sickness or sorrow. 3. *He had faith enough to believe in our Lord's power to save his child's life.* This faith was based upon testimony; for the Cana miracle, as well as the signs done at Jerusalem, must have been noised all over Galilee.

**II. OUR LORD'S TESTING ANSWER TO HIS APPLICATION.** "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe." 1. *The words, though addressed to the royal officer, are really designed for the Jews, who wish to see him as a Worker of miracles.* They desire to see miracles, not as the mere manifestation of facts of the invisible world, as "signs," but as "wonders" calculated by their strangeness to arrest attention. 2. *The Jews represent a lower type of faith than the Samaritans, who asked for no miracle, but merely believed in Christ's word.* 3. *Yet the Lord condescends to the demands of a faith which is more sight than faith.*

**III. THE INCREASING URGENCY OF A FATHER'S SORROW.** "Sir, come down ere my child die." 1. *He did not regard our Lord's words as any rejection of his prayer.* 2. *His powerlessness leads him to a more unreserved dependence upon the Lord's power.*

**IV. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO HIS PRAYER.** "Go thy way; thy son liveth." 1. *A word is enough.* Divine power acts through a word. 2. *The Lord gives us often more than we ask for.* 3. *Jesus strengthens the faith of the royal officer by shifting his faith from the testimony of others to faith in himself.* It rests now on a better foundation, even in Jesus Christ himself.

**V. THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH.** "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." 1. *He believed in Christ's power to heal his son a distance of twenty-five miles from Capernaum.* This fact marks the rapid growth of his faith. 2. *His faith received a speedy confirmation.* "And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, Thy son liveth." His faith has now reached its highest point, that of personal experience.

**VI. THE FAITH OF THE ROYAL OFFICER EXTENDS TO HIS HOUSEHOLD.** "And himself believed, and his whole house." 1. *A weak faith has in it the elements of growth.* 2. *The faith of a father often leads, through the Divine blessing, to the conversion of his household.*

### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

**Ver. 9.—Patriotism and Christianity.** In human affairs the scale upon which things are done gives them, not only their interest and importance, but much also of their very character. The same spirit which in petty communities is local jealousy may in nations claim the dignified appellation of patriotism. The differences and disputes between Jews and Samaritans may possess for us but little real interest; whilst the sentiments not very dissimilar, which are cherished by great nations, claim dignity and grandeur. This passage in the gospel narrative is suggestive with regard to the relations between Christianity and the love of country.

**I. THERE IS A GOOD SIDE TO PATRIOTISM WHICH, AS COMPARED WITH SELFISHNESS, IS A VIRTUE.** The love of country is both greater and more difficult than the love of family or the love of self. It is morally elevating for a man to lose regard for his own interests in an absorbing desire for the welfare of his tribe or nation. Great deeds have been wrought, and great characters have been shaped, by love of fatherland.

**II. THERE IS A BAD SIDE TO PATRIOTISM WHICH, AS CONTRASTED WITH PHILANTHROPY, IS A FAULT.** The love of country may be magnified selfishness. When it renders a man insensible to the merits of those of alien blood or of different education, it warps the nature, and is often the occasion of injustice. Crimes have been done, and that sincerely, in the name of patriotism. Envy and jealousy, hatred, malice, and revenge, have sprung from spurious patriotism—that is, from a too exclusive regard to the interests or the honour of a nation.

**III. CHRISTIANITY, WHILST NOT INIMICAL TO TRUE PATRIOTISM, INTRODUCES A GREAT DIVINE UNITING POWER INTO HUMAN SOCIETY.** 1. The religion of Christ teaches the unity of the human race. It represents humanity as united by common origin and participation in a common nature. 2. The religion of Christ bases human unity upon the fatherhood of God. The family is one, because acknowledging one Head. 3. The Incarnation reveals and establishes this unity. Christ is the Son of man, the Friend of man, the Brother of man, the Saviour of man, the Lord of man. In him provision is made for the restoration of that unity which sin has broken.

**IV. CHRISTIANITY THUS ENCOURAGES SUCH PATRIOTISM AS IS GOOD, AND CHECKS THE EVILS OFTEN CLOAKED UNDER THE NAME.** 1. On the one hand, the religion of Christ fosters the feeling of duty which has its scope in political relationships. The duty nearest us is first, and, as we must not neglect our own household for the sake of strangers, so neither must we prefer foreigners and their interest to the welfare of our "kindred according to the flesh." A spurious philanthropy is a poor substitute for a genuine patriotism. 2. On the other hand, our religion forbids us to limit our regard to our immediate neighbours; and requires us to sweep with our spiritual vision the vast horizon of humanity. There is a homely proverb, "Charity begins at home;" to which a homely addition has been made, "but does not end there." The patriotism that takes us out of self is good; yet alone it is insufficient. It should broaden until our regard and our interest and our love reach far as the virtue of Christ's sacrifice, far as the range of Christ's gospel. Suspicions and contentions are alien from the Spirit of Christ. There is no limit to the comprehensiveness of the Saviour's pity; there should be no limit to the comprehensiveness of his people's love.—T.

**Ver. 10.—"If thou knewest!"** How easily and how skilfully in these words did Jesus turn the conversation with the Samaritan woman from the water of the well to those blessings which that water symbolized! What more fitted to provoke curiosity and further inquiry? What more fitted to suggest reflection upon spiritual wants, and spiritual satisfaction, than this reply of our Lord to the woman's strange and almost unfriendly remark upon his application? As a matter of fact, the language of Jesus did serve to raise and to sustain a conversation to which we owe some of the most precious and the most sublime utterances which fell from our Saviour's lips. What

was said to this woman was really spoken by him for the benefit of all who fail to gain from him the blessings which are at his command and disposal, and are within their reach.

**I. WHAT MEN FAIL TO SEE AND TO HEAR.** 1. The unenlightened and unspiritual do not recognize in Christ the Gift of God. They do not look beneath the surface, and consequently do not recognize the true glory, the Divine power, which are the real attributes of the Son of man. 2. They do not discern in the tones of the Saviour's voice the Divine authority with which he ever speaks. In every word of his may be perceived, by the spiritually cultured, "grace and truth," the utterance of superhuman wisdom and superhuman love. But to multitudes his speech has, alas! no Divine significance.

**II. WHAT MEN CONSEQUENTLY FAIL TO ASK.** Had the woman of Samaria known more of Jesus, she would have asked of him, and thus have received the "living water." And it is reasonable to believe that ignorance, more or less culpable, is the reason why many remain unblest when blessing is within their reach. They do not ask, either (1) because they do not feel the need of the "living water," which alone can bring life, satisfaction, and refreshment to the soul; or (2) because they do not think of the Lord Jesus as of the One Being who alone can supply the wants experienced.

**III. WHAT MEN, THEREFORE, FAIL TO ENJOY.** It is observable that Jesus gave the woman to understand that *asking* would have secured the supply of her deepest needs. As the conversation proceeded, the Saviour unfolded the nature of the blessings he came to bring, and which men withhold from themselves only by restraining faith and prayer. These blessings are within the reach of all whose hearts are athirst for the water of life, and are obtainable upon the simple condition of compliance with the terms appointed by Divine wisdom. Free as the streams which flow from mountain springs are the blessings of the gospel of God. Yet to multitudes these blessings are inaccessible, simply from their want of knowledge, their want of spiritual appreciation, and their want of believing prayer.—T.

**Ver. 11.—"From whence?"** A remark or inquiry sometimes suggests more than was intended by the speaker. Words often unconsciously imply far more than appears upon the surface. We have an instance of this in the question put to the Lord Jesus by the Samaritan woman. She only half understood what the Divine Prophet meant when he spoke of living water. And the inquiry, "*From whence* then hast thou that living water?" is suggestive of considerations most interesting and most serious.

**I. IT IS A FACT THAT THE WORLD OBTAINS MANY AND GREAT BLESSINGS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.** The living water is the emblem of personal, social, and general benefits which have been experienced through long centuries in virtue of the advent, the ministry, and sacrifice of the Son of man.

**II. IT IS UNREASONABLE TO ATTRIBUTE THESE BLESSINGS TO ORDINARY, EARTHLY, AND HUMAN SOURCES.** An examination of their quality proves them to be different from any, superior to any, which other teachers, other religions, provide. Every attempt to refer the blessings of Christianity to human origin has failed; either by depreciating the value of the streams or by exaggerating the virtue of the sources.

**III. THE QUESTION IS THUS FORCED UPON REFLECTING MINDS, "FROM WHENCE?"** There is a general desire to know the causes of great effects. And men have a special interest in a case which so nearly concerns themselves. There is no fear lest men should resign themselves to contented ignorance upon matters of so high moment. Agnosticism is self-condemned.

**IV. THE ONLY SATISFACTORY ANSWER TO THIS INQUIRY IS, "FROM ABOVE!"** The Divine origin of the sacred blessings procured by Christ for man is apparent from their nature. They are fraught with spiritual life and spiritual refreshment, such as this world cannot yield. It is apparent also from the abundance and perpetuity of these blessings. They come leaping up as from an exhaustless spring. They come falling down as in an unceasing shower. All other explanations fail. The world yields nought but an echo to the heart's eager cry, "*From whence?*" The true answer is that which revelation affords. The source of the spiritual blessings which Christianity confers upon mankind is heavenly and Divine. This reply is completely and for ever sufficient.—T.

**Ver. 15.—*The Suppliant supplicated.*** Our Lord Jesus was so truly Divine that he had only to be in the society of human beings who had any spiritual susceptibility and power of appreciation, in order to awaken their reverence and to call forth their confidence. Such proved to be the case in this memorable incident.

**I. A CHANGE OF SPIRITUAL ATTITUDE IS HERE EXHIBITED.** At first Jesus had asked water from the Samaritan woman, who seemed almost reluctant to grant so small a favour, and who laid stress upon nationality rather than upon humanity. But a short conversation wrought a marvellous change. And soon the woman came to beg for living water from him who had just before asked from her a draught from Jacob's well. How many have listened to the gospel, have turned their gaze towards Christ, with indifference, and even with a kind of ignorant condescension, who, upon knowing more of him, have exchanged indifference and contempt for reverence and faith! There are those who consider that a favour is asked from them by the ministers of religion when they are urged to accept the Lord Jesus; who seem to suppose that their adhesion would be a boon, if not to the Saviour, yet to his people. Let such persons really come into spiritual contact with Christ, and the case will be altogether changed. They will then see that they have nothing to give, and all to gain, and the Divine Benefactor of humanity will be approached with humble entreaty.

**II. THE ATTRACTION EXERCISED BY THE DIVINE WATER OF LIFE IS HERE ILLUSTRATED.** 1. We discern, on the part of the Samaritan woman, the desire for personal satisfaction. "That I thirst not" is a plea that personal cravings may be stilled and personal wants supplied. Let Christ's gift be understood, and the approach of it will excite the longing of the needy spirit. 2. We perceive also the desire to take to others, by a ministry of help, a Divine satisfaction. "Neither come hither to draw" is language which reminds us that the woman came to the well, not only to supply her own need, but to fetch water for her household. Could Jesus help her to minister to the wants of others in some way more satisfactory and less tedious than that to which she was accustomed? Experience shows that to realize, not only our own wants, but the wants of those connected with and dependent upon us, is increasingly to appreciate that spiritual provision which is symbolized by the living water.

**III. APPLICATION TO THE TRUE SOURCE FOR THE WATER OF LIFE IS HERE EXEMPLIFIED.** With all her faults, there were in this woman a clearness of thinking, a directness of language, and a candour of disposition which we cannot but admire. Once convinced that the mysterious Stranger before her had great gifts to confer, she promptly sought the promised good. The directness of her appeal, in which was no qualification, is an example to all who approach Christ. Those whom the gospel reaches, and who are convinced that the Lord Jesus is the Spring of life eternal to mankind, are reminded that they should apply without delay to the Personal and Divine Source of the highest blessing, with the assurance, which his character inspires, that they cannot ask of him in vain.—T.

**Ver. 21.—*Worship and holy places.*** The superstition of the Samaritan woman gave occasion to the utterances by Christ of his sublime revelation regarding the spirituality of worship. There was competition between the Samaritans, who performed their devotions upon the summit of Gerizim, and the Jews, to whom Jerusalem was the holy city and the temple the house of God. Jesus put aside this controversy and rivalry, and passed from it to the enunciation of specially Christian truth.

**I. THERE IS A NATURAL TENDENCY IN MEN AND IN NATIONS TO REGARD CERTAIN PLACES AS SACRED.** Where is the country in which there have not been consecrated mountains, valleys, and groves? Where the religion which has not boasted its sacred oracles, its solemn temples, its spots hallowed by memorable, by awful associations? Devotion, at all events of a kind, is stimulated by local assistance. The buildings where one has experienced unusual emotions acquire sanctity and elicit reverence.

**II. THE SATISFACTION OF THIS TENDENCY OFTEN OBSCURES THE SPIRITUALITY OF TRUE WORSHIP.** The means are mistaken for the end; the place for the purposes it is intended to promote. Hence it has often come to pass that those who are most employed about sacred places, and who become most familiar with them, have less than others of the sentiment of true devotion. There is a proverb, "The nearer to Rome, the further from God."

III. DURING THE PREPARATORY DISPENSATION, IT PLEASED GOD IN HIS WISDOM TO MAKE USE OF THIS TENDENCY TO PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL ENDS. The temple at Jerusalem actually *was* the house of God; in it *was* the holiest place; its beauty *was* the beauty of holiness. Such a provision was adapted to the religious childhood of humanity. Thus reverence was inculcated, the consciousness of a Divine presence was elicited, and the minds of men were drawn on to more elevated and spiritual conceptions.

IV. THE INCARNATION SUPERSEDED ALL LOCAL SANCTITY. Our Lord Jesus became the true Tabernacle, the true Temple. In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The temple of his body was taken down, but in three days was reared again. On the other hand, the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed, never to be replaced.

V. THE TENDENCY OF TRUE RELIGION IS NOT SO MUCH TO DE-CONSECRATE ANY PLACE AS TO CONSECRATE ALL PLACES. Doubtless, as our Lord declared, spiritual worship is independent of localities. Yet all places where Christians meet, and where the Master is spiritually present, become "holiness unto the Lord."

"Jesus, where'er thy people meet,  
There they behold thy mercy-seat;  
Where'er they seek thee thou art found,  
And every spot is hallowed ground!"

T.

Vers. 23, 24.—*Worship and worshippers.* In some form worship is all but universal. Wherever on earth man is found, there he presents to the Power above the offerings of his devotion. Doubtless there are cases without number in which worship has degenerated into mere superstition. Yet, where worship is at its best, it is one of the very highest manifestations and exercises of human nature. Much has been said by philosophers, by poets, by theologians, concerning the nature and the virtue of worship. But more light has been cast upon this subject by Jesus, in the few words recorded to have been spoken by him to the poor Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar, than has been yielded from every other source. Few portions of our Lord's discourses have been more quoted or more admired than this. But the world has still much to learn from these memorable sayings.

I. CHRIST TELLS US WHOM WE ARE TO WORSHIP. Idolaters offer their adoration, in some cases to the great and imposing objects of nature, as the sun, the moon, etc.; in other cases to the works of their own hands, as to images of silver, of gold, of wood, etc. The perplexed in mind have worshipped "the Unknown God," and agnostics profess to venerate "the Unknowable." But it is the happy privilege of Christians to worship the God who is revealed by the Lord Jesus. 1. As the *Spirit*, apprehended, not by the senses, but by the soul. The Divine Being, spiritual in nature, everywhere present, everywhere conscious, everywhere acting, is the proper Object of human worship. 2. As the *Father*, who is not distant and unapproachable, but very near, to whom we owe our being, who supplies our wants, exercises over us a constant care, and trains us for the future by a moral discipline. Such is the affectionate relation which is sustained to us by the great Object of our adoration.

II. CHRIST TELLS US HOW WE ARE TO WORSHIP. There have been devised by men's ingenuity and superstition many methods by which it has been thought worship might be acceptably offered. Bodily posture, ascetic rites, unholy ceremonial, painful pilgrimages, and cruel sacrifices have been deemed acceptable, and have accordingly been practised. In contradistinction from such modes of service, Christ bids his disciples worship: 1. *In spirit*. Man's spirit, because created in the likeness of the heavenly Father, possesses the power of honouring, praising, thanking, and loving the living God. The heart is the seat of loyalty, of gratitude, of love. Not that worship is to be locked up in the secrecy of the breast; it may and will find expression in solemn speech and joyful song. But all utterances and forms of worship derive their value and their power from their being the manifestation of spiritual life and spiritual aspirations. 2. *In truth*; i.e. with a just conception of the Being worshipped, and in sincerity and reality. Such worship will be personal, and not merely formal or vicarious. The priest must not arrogate the functions of the worshipper. And true worship will be of the life, as well as of the lips; for both alike will be accepted as the revelation of deep and spiritual feeling.



III. CHRIST TELLS US WHEN AND WHERE WE ARE TO WORSHIP. Upon these points his lessons differ from the maxims and the practices of those who follow the narrow ordinances of superstition. For whereas men have usually set apart special places and special seasons as peculiarly suitable for worship, as peculiarly acceptable to God, the Lord Christ speaks on these subjects with a breadth and freedom quite superhuman. 1. *At all times*, irrespective of human ordinances and customs. There are special seasons when it is well, when it is in accordance with the practice of the Church, and even with the authority of the primitive Christians, to offer stated, solemn, and spiritual sacrifices. But both the precepts and the example of Jesus assure us that we are not confined to such times, but that there is no season when sincere worship is not acceptable to God. 2. *In every place* worship may be presented to the omnipresent Creator. No longer on the heights of Gerizim or in the temple of Jerusalem, *i.e.* exclusively and specially, is the Eternal Father worshipped. Wherever God's people meet together in a devout and lowly attitude of mind, and under the guidance of the Spirit of God, there is a consecrated place. Nay, the scene of retired and solitary worship is holy; for a worshipping nature and a worshipped Deity are together there.

IV. CHRIST TELLS US WHY WE ARE TO WORSHIP. 1. One reason is to be sought in ourselves—in our own nature; we have been made capable of this lofty exercise. This is a prerogative denied to the inferior creatures of God. We live beneath the high possibilities of our being, if we restrain worship and draw not near unto the Father of our spirits. 2. Another reason is to be found in God himself; his nature and character are such as to command and to invite our worship. Our heavenly Father cannot be known by any who are capable of right judgment and right feeling without appearing to such deserving of the lowliest and most fervent adoration. 3. God *seeks* believing worshippers. An amazing proof both of condescension and compassion! How can we withhold from God that which he, the Almighty Lord, deigns to seek from us?—T.

Ver. 23.—*The Divine search.* That we should seek God seems most natural and proper. Poor, ignorant, sinful, helpless creatures that we are, we should be insensible and infatuated if we did not seek him who alone can supply our wants, pardon our errors, and secure our happiness. But that God should seek us seems passing strange. This is like the king seeking the rebel, the philosopher seeking the boor. Yet we have here an instance of the truth that "God's ways are not our ways."

I. WHOM GOD SEEKS. 1. Spiritual natures are the object of his quest. To him nothing is more precious than the souls of men. 2. They whom he seeks are his children. When once we realize the fatherhood of God, the difficulty disappears in the way of believing that the Eternal can concern himself with such a quest as this.

II. WHAT GOD SEEKS. It is the true *worship* of his people, his children, that the Father desires. He seeks: 1. *Sincere* worship; that which is not of the lip merely, but of the heart. 2. *Intelligent* worship; that which is not superstitious or formal, or traditional, but such as proceeds from a nature convinced of the Divine existence, and appreciative of the Divine attributes. 3. *Sympathetic* worship; rejoicing in the faithfulness, the righteousness, the love, of that adorable Being who is justly praised and honoured. 4. *Consistent* worship; *i.e.* such as is supported by a life and conduct truly harmonious with the language and the sentiments of devotion.

III. How GOD SEEKS. The Omnipotent can be at no loss to devise means by which his purposes may be brought to pass. Men, indeed, often seek what is dear to them in a manner which defeats their own aims; but it cannot be so with the All-wise and Almighty. 1. God seeks true worshippers by manifesting himself. If he be not known, or be not known aright, those ignorant of him cannot render suitable and acceptable worship. One great purpose of revelation, and especially of the Incarnation, is this—that God may so be seen and known that he may be duly glorified and served. 2. By removing the obstacles which prevent sinful men from worshipping aright their holy Creator and Lord. The great work of redemption must be regarded as the chief and most admirable method by which the King of glory seeks to secure the homage and loyalty of his sinful subjects. 3. By the actual invitations of his Word. Inasmuch as he is infinitely the Superior, any advances must come from him. And the commands such as, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," are intended to press upon us what is his good pleasure; whilst the invitations such as,

"O come, let us worship and bow down : let us kneel before the Lord our Maker," are designed to encourage us to lay aside our fears, and to worship him "in the beauty of holiness."

IV. WHY GOD SEEKS. It is sometimes objected to Christian worship that it assumes a Being delighting in his own praises, and so partaking of the infirmity of human vanity. It is said that if even wise men are above this weakness, it is dishonouring to the Eternal to ascribe to him any desire to delight himself in the adoration of his creatures, whose praises, after all, may be very little worthy of his acceptance. But it is a misapprehension to attribute such littleness to Jehovah. He "inhabith the praises of Israel;" but he simply claims what it is right for him to have, and profitable for men to offer. To withhold worship from the All-worshipful would evince the grossest insensibility and ingratitude. And experience shows that there is no attitude, no exercise, of the human spirit so fitted as is worship to exalt and refine the affections, and to purify and dignify the whole nature.—T.

Ver. 29.—*The power of a personal revelation.* The narrative makes it evident that this Samaritan woman was a person of very decided character. The sympathetic spirit in which she received Christ's teaching, her adroitness in changing the inconvenient course of the conversation, her vigorous action in directing the attention of the people of the city to the Divine Visitor, all indicate the woman's intelligence and independence. It is most of all remarkable that what weighed chiefly with her, in arriving at a just conviction regarding the claim of Jesus, was his insight into her own life and character—his ability to reveal her to himself. A great spiritual principle is here exemplified.

I. PERSONAL REVELATION THE CHIEF AGENCY IN PRODUCING CONVICTION. 1. It is noticeable that our Lord chose to utter to this woman of Samaria some of his sublimest revelations of religious truth. To her he declared himself to be the "living water" which alone can assuage the thirst of humanity. To her he communicated the glorious and ever-memorable truth, "God is a Spirit." To her he revealed the necessity of spiritual worship. All these revelations made, it is clear, an impression on the woman's mind. She was an interested and thoughtful listener. Declarations such as these could not but fill her mind with amazement, could not but raise her thoughts heavenwards. 2. Yet the text makes it plain that what chiefly produced conviction of Jesus' Messiahship was his penetration into her heart, his perusal of her history, his revelation to her of her own character, her own conduct, in the light of the Divine Law, and doubtless also in the light of his own pity and loving-kindness. It is not to be imagined that the power of this revelation lay simply in its correspondence with the actual facts of the woman's life. Christ detected the moral significance of all she had done, and made all apparent to her in the light of a very tender, but a very faithful criticism. This made her feel towards him as she had felt towards none other. That he should enter into, and interest himself in, what she had been, what sort of life she had led and was leading,—this was wonderful. But that he should deal with her conscience and heart as he did—though we are left to conjecture how—that he should open up to her sinful nature the glory and the grace of the Eternal Father,—this was convincing, this was effective in bringing about her bold acknowledgment, for such virtually was the inquiry, "Is not this the Christ?" The same principle holds good to-day. The witness that chiefly issues in the enlightenment and conversion of sinful men is the witness which the Saviour bears to *their* sinfulness and need, and to *his own* Divine sufficiency to meet their case and bring them back to God.

II. PERSONAL REVELATION THE CHIEF AGENCY PROMPTING TO EVANGELIZATION. We should have expected that when the woman returned to the city, and conversed with the townspeople, her chief endeavour would have been to give them some idea of the transcendent wisdom of the Lord Jesus—some evidence of his Messiahship. But such does not seem to have been the case. She acted upon the principle, "We believe, therefore we speak." Like the apostles, she testified of what she had seen and heard and handled, etc. Enlightened and impressed, benefited and purified, this woman became a missionary to her countrymen. The same principle is applicable to our own time. We need not expect men to become bearers of glad tidings to their fellow-men merely because impressed with the grandeur of Divine truth. The impulse that leads

to such testimony must come from a personal experience of the power of the gospel, and from a personal faith and affection towards the Divine Redeemer.—T.

**Ver. 34.—*Spiritual work and spiritual food.*** The incident in our Saviour's ministry recorded in this narrative pictures him as possessed and engrossed by the very purest devotion to the great ends of his ministry. He had been thirsty; but he had lost all thought of bodily thirst in his absorbing interest in the living water and in the satisfaction of spiritual aspirations. He was in need of food; yet when his disciples brought him food from the city he was indifferent to it, for he had meat to eat which they knew not of. The work of his Father was the food of his soul. Christ's language here exhibits—

**I. THE HIGHEST VIEW OF SPIRITUAL AND BENEVOLENT EFFORT.** This is all the more striking and wonderful when we remember the dignity, the Divinity of the Speaker. 1. All he did had reference to his Father. The "will" of the Father was for him supreme; the Father had "sent" him into the world for a definite purpose. 2. His mission was one of active service. Jesus, no doubt, came to live; to be himself, to suffer for our sins. But although his mere living among men was an incomparable lesson, though his death was of incomparable value, we must not lose sight of his activity, his ministry of energetic service. 3. His aim was to bring the undertaking committed to him to a conclusion honourable to himself and to the Father. In accomplishing, in finishing, his work, he found a Divine satisfaction. Allowing for the difference between Master and servants, we may recognize in Christ's view of his life-work the model for our own. To think thus of our human vocation will add a dignity to our life, an effectiveness to our ministry.

**II. THE PLACE WHICH A LIFE OF SPIRITUAL AND BENEVOLENT EFFORT HOLDS IN THE AFFECTIONS.** 1. Work for God is the necessity of the Master and of the servants alike. As the body cannot live without food, so the higher nature cannot be maintained in health, in life, without work for God. It was so with Christ, who could forget water and bread, though thirsty and hungry, but who could not exist without labouring for the cause of human well-being. 2. Work for God affords the servant of God the purest satisfaction and delight. The thirsty and famishing traveller is revived and gladdened when he comes where he can quench his thirst and satisfy his hunger. Greater joy did our Lord find when there opened up before him some opportunity of doing the will of God in securing the enlightenment, the conversion, the consolation, of some poor human soul. 3. Work for God, like food, strengthens for new and larger efforts. Work is its own wages. They who toil eat, and they who eat are the fitter for renewed and happy work. If it was thus with the Master and Lord, shall it not be thus with the disciple, the follower, the servant, the friend? We are encouraged, not only to take a high view of Christian service, but to seek in it our purest satisfaction, and the means of unceasing devotedness and usefulness.—T.

**Ver. 42.—*"The Saviour of the world."*** This witness was a glorious close to our Lord's brief ministry among the Samaritans.

**I. THE MARVEL OF THIS WITNESS TO CHRIST.** Nothing in the gospel narrative can be to the thoughtful reader more surprising than that this view of our Lord's office should have been taken and expressed by persons in the position of these Samaritans in the village of Sychar, and especially at this early stage of our Lord's ministry. This is the more marvellous when we remember that neither the Jews generally, nor even Christ's own disciples, had attained to such a conception of Jesus, and when we remember also that the Samaritans occupied a position of inferior privilege, for "salvation was from the Jews."

**II. THE MEANS WHICH LED TO THIS WITNESS TO CHRIST.** 1. The testimony of the woman who had been favoured with a long and intimate conversation with the Divine Prophet, and whose conscience had testified to his acquaintance with her character and moral life. 2. Their own acquaintance with his religious doctrines, gained during the two days' residence among them. 3. The impression which his presence and demeanour had made upon their minds; for they could not but perceive his superiority to all others whom they had known.

**III. THE FULNESS OF THIS WITNESS TO CHRIST.** It is remarkable that none, how-

ever advanced in religious knowledge, can go beyond this testimony. That Jesus was a *Saviour*, and not a mere Teacher,—this was a truth which it was creditable to the Samaritans' discernment to attain. But that he was the *Saviour of the world*,—this was a truth which only the truest insight, the fullest sympathy, of a spiritual kind could reveal. There was in this profession an anticipation of our Lord's own words, "I will draw all men unto myself," and a justification for the most admiring reverence of Christ, and for the most extensive and glorious prospect for mankind.—T.

**Vers. 46—54.—The growth of faith.** In this, as in so many of our Lord's miracles, the external circumstances and incidents, interesting though they are, are less so than the spiritual lessons they teach, the spiritual processes they unfold. What manner of Saviour Christ is; how he deals with the souls of men for their good; what blessings he brings to those whom he prepares to receive them;—these great lessons are brought before us in this narrative, so simple and so natural in itself, yet so deep in its significance.

**I. HOW FAITH IN CHRIST ARISES IN THE SOUL.** 1. Look at this nobleman's circumstances: his son was sick and at the point of death. Sickness and death are evils, but not unmixed evils. They may, when they come into men's homes, be the means of saving them from selfishness and the pursuit of pleasure, and from indifference to spiritual and eternal realities. This man felt his need of a Helper, but none appeared, and he was brought to a sense of his helplessness and utter distress. In all this was a preparation for faith in a Divine Physician. 2. Look now at the timely appearance upon the scene of the very Friend whom the nobleman needed. Jesus, at this very crisis, had returned from Judæa to Galilee, and had taken up his abode for a time at Cana, within easy reach of Capernaum, the afflicted nobleman's home. The effect was like the preaching of the gospel to a person overwhelmed with the sorrows of life or stricken with a sense of sin. 3. Look at the effect of these tidings in these circumstances. Fatherly affection and anxiety render the nobleman alert and alive to any prospect of help. The rumour of Christ's mighty works suggests to him the possibility that the power of the Prophet may be used for the healing of his son. Thus relative solicitude becomes a means of grace.

**II. THE FIRST STEP TO WHICH FAITH PROMPTS.** 1. Remark the approach and the appeal. The nobleman goes to the Prophet, and begs him to come down and heal his son. There was faith here; for perhaps to no one else in the land could this entreaty have been addressed. Though the applicant did not fully understand what Jesus could do, he yet had confidence both in his power and willingness, so far as he could understand them. 2. Observe, too, the repetition and urgency displayed in the renewed entreaty used by the nobleman, even after a somewhat discouraging reception on the part of Jesus. This spirit of persistency and importunity, disagreeable to many, seems always to have been welcomed by Jesus, who saw in it an earnestness allied to faith.

**III. THE REBUKE OF WEAK FAITH.** 1. The feebleness of the nobleman's faith seems to have been detected in his request that the great Physician should go down to Capernaum to visit the patient. The faith of the centurion was no doubt far stronger than that of the courtier; yet we cannot wonder that it should not have occurred to this applicant that Jesus should "speak the word only." 2. But this feebleness of faith was made still more apparent by the censure implied in Christ's reply, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe." Our Lord, and his Apostle Paul afterwards, were evidently and most painfully affected by the demand of the Jews for signs and wonders. Instead of believing on Christ, and then looking for miracles as the natural exercise of his Divine power, these prodigy-loving Hebrews asked for marvels and portents, as the things of chief concern, withholding faith until these should be granted them.

**IV. THE REWARD OF SINCERE FAITH.** It is clear, from this and other passages, that Jesus distinguished between *no* faith and *little* faith. He saw that the applicant's faith was growing, for this was evinced by the repetition of the urgent entreaty. The rebuke of Jesus rather stimulated than repressed what measure of confidence the nobleman possessed. The brevity of the reply was the brevity of authority and command, "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

**V. FAITH IS FURTHER STRENGTHENED BY PERSONAL CONTACT WITH JESUS.** There

was a virtue in the Lord's presence, language, and tones—a virtue which was felt by this applicant. He believed the word, and acted in accordance with his belief; and immediately went his way. There are some who have enough faith to bring them to Christ with their petitions, but not enough to rest in Christ's words in which their application is answered. There is, however, every reason why the suppliant should unhesitatingly confide in the assurance of the Saviour, which his very anxiety and eagerness may possibly lead to his doubting.

VI. EXPERIENCE MAKES FAITH PERFECT. The nobleman appears not to have hastened on his return. "He that believeth shall not make haste." He hurried to Christ with his request. It was well that he should not hurry from Christ, now that the boon was granted. Yet, when he met his servants, there may have been some eagerness to know how it was with the boy. And when he learned that the hour of Christ's utterance was the hour of his son's cure, there remained no cloud to shade the brightness of his faith. He believed now, not simply, as at first, the report of Christ; not even, as afterwards, the word of Christ, but Christ himself. This was the faith of a full surrender and devotion. Henceforth the Lord was all to him. His life became a brighter, purer, nobler, stronger thing, because Christ was his, and he was Christ's. The memory of his Lord's mercy could never fade from his mind. What the Lord Jesus does for us and for ours should and must strengthen our confidence in him for all purposes, for all the circumstances, duties, and trials of life.

VII. FAITH SPREADS FROM ONE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY TO THE REST. The whole household believed; for all had the same evidence, and all partook of the same joy. The presence of the restored and healthy boy would be a perpetual reminder of the obligation under which Jesus laid the whole family. A believing household is a microcosm of the household of faith.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. 1. Christ's discernment of human character. 2. His compassion for human suffering and sorrow. 3. His appreciation of human faith.—T.

VERS. 31-34.—*The physical and spiritual food of man.* Notice—

I. THE FOOD OF THE BODY. "Master, eat." 1. *The body must have food.* It is true that "man doth not live by bread alone," but it is quite as true that he cannot live without bread. Man's physical nature requires suitable physical support. If we wish to live, we must eat—eat to live, but not live to eat. 2. *The body must have food at stated times.* "In due season." There is physical waste, there is a continual demand, and there must be a continual supply. There is a law of health and life, and should be observed. The prayer of the disciples, "Master, eat," was quite timely and natural. The meal-time had passed, and he was hungry and fatigued, and their request was the natural language of propriety, want, and kindness. 3. *The claims of the body are recognized by Christ:* (1) In the *provisions of nature.* In their fulness and variety he was the Provider, and there is no way so effectual to recognize the claims of the body as to provide amply for it. (2) Under human conditions, *he was thoroughly human.* He knew by experience what were hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and, as such, he could sympathize with the cravings of others. He had sent his disciples unto the city to buy meat; not, perhaps, so much for his own sake as that of his disciples. In little things he was more concerned for others than for himself. (3) He was *sociable and simple in his diet.* There was not one table for the Lord and another for the servants; but he shared with them, and his fare was simple and homely. And this, perhaps, was better for mental and spiritual labour. Eating and drinking were secondary matters with him. Nevertheless, by example, by actions and words, he fully recognized the claims of the body.

II. THE FOOD OF THE SOUL. 1. *Doing the Divine will.* "My meat is to do the will," etc. (1) This involves *self-sacrificing service.* A service devoted entirely to God. Self is altogether ignored. Jesus was rapt in the will of him that sent him. He lived in his Father, and fed on his will. (2) This service involves *the whole of his Divine will.* "His work." Including his will in its minutest details—the brief mission of Samaria; and also in its most comprehensive purposes—the salvation of the human family, the great scheme of redemption. (3) This service involves *the carrying out the Divine will to its final and proper issues.* "And to finish his work." The completion of the work inspires and supports the Worker all through. It is the wine

of the spirit and the reviver of the soul. This was Jesus' meat. And it is ever the true food of the soul. 2. *As soul-food, many are ignorant of it.* Even the disciples were so now. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." (1) There is ignorance of its *nature and origin*. It is spiritual and heavenly. In the disciples as yet the material was in the ascendant. They were babes in Christ, dependent on the nurse. The soul had scarcely opened its eye, was scarcely conscious of its real wants. (2) There is ignorance of its *value and effects*. From the beginning the will of God is the real food of the soul; but on account of sin, materialism, animalism, and indifference, the realization of it was exceptional, and ignorance of its true value and effect was the rule. This was specially the case at the time of Christ's earthly history. Its value and effect must be known by experience. (3) It was *the mission of Christ to reveal it*, to introduce it, create a craving in humanity for it, and to supply them with the knowledge of its nature and value. This he did by precept and example. "My meat is to do the will," etc. His whole life and death were brilliant, but most familiar and telling illustrations of the Divine will as the only genuine food of the human soul. 3. *As soul-food, it is essential and perfectly adapted.* (1) The soul is *spiritual* in its essence and wants, and must be supplied with spiritual food, else it cannot thrive and grow and be useful and happy. The will of God is adapted to supply all this. It is spiritual and Divine. (2) The soul is *immortal*, and must have immortal nourishment. The will of God is the imperishable meat, and calculated to satisfy the immortal cravings of the soul. Christ brought life and immortality to light. Let the soul feed on him, and its immortal instincts will be nourished; and this is only the will of God. (3) The soul is *an emanation of the Divine will*. Its parentage suggests at once its only proper food. The babe feeds and thrives on its mother's milk. What but the will of God can feed the offspring of that will? (4) It is *essential and adapted to the well-being and final perfection of the soul*. What is its well-being and final perfection? Growth in its original direction, holiness, perfect love, as much God-likeness and happiness as it is capable of. To do the will of God will effect all this. As a proof, look at Christ. What made his character perfect and his manhood complete? The proper answer is in his own words: "My meat is to do the will of him," etc. 4. *As soul-food, it is delightful.* "My meat." To do the will of God is not a burden, but a delight; not sacrifice, but pleasure. It is like food to the hungry or water to the thirsty. It is not a mere duty, but a natural instinct and craving, a passion and the highest gratification of being. "My meat." Never a man enjoyed the daintiest dish as well as the believing soul enjoys doing the will of God. It is his meat. 5. *As soul-food, it is absorbingly satisfying.* The claims of God and the spiritual interest of humanity are stronger than any other. They are supreme. (1) Stronger in this case than *social custom*. It was customary among the Jews, as among all nations, to partake of food at stated times of the day. Jesus and his disciples generally observed and provided for this. The custom was strong; but doing the will of God, to Christ, was infinitely stronger. The custom was ignored. (2) Stronger than *the solicitations of friends*. The disciples begged and even prayed him to eat. This was done out of pure kindness and sympathy, and Jesus was by no means unimpressive to this. Even human kindness had great influence on him, but could not prevail now. He had fed, and was even then feeding, on a higher and more satisfying food. (3) Stronger than *the cravings of nature*. Jesus was fatigued and hungry when the disciples left for the city to buy meat, but meanwhile he was fed with food from the city of the great King. In a higher sense the disciples were right in surmising that some one had brought him ought to eat. God had fed him with his will, and he had partaken of food by doing his will. The success of his brief and almost accidental mission in Samaria satisfied him, and the spiritual impression on the woman and the sight of Samaritan citizens already streaming to him over the plain so filled his soul with satisfaction and joy that bodily food was forgotten, and the thought of it almost distasteful. The material was lost in the spiritual, the personal in the general, and the human in the Divine. The cravings of his own bodily wants were completely neutralized by the unspeakable delight of doing the will of God in supplying the spiritual wants of others.

LESSONS. 1. *The claims of the body, although important, are nothing to those of the soul.* The former are represented by the disciples on this occasion, the latter by Christ. "Master, eat," they said. "Disciples, eat," he said; but pointed them to their higher

nature and its true nourishment. 2. *We should cultivate the spiritual appetite to feed on the will of God.* For this is the proper food of the soul, adapted here and hereafter. From the altitude of spiritual satisfaction and joy earthly things appear gross, and material food becomes too distasteful for even thought, much more for participation. This points to a state where material food will not be required, nor can it be procured. Let the soul free itself from all gross influences and from the dominion of bodily appetites and passions, and this will discipline it for the enjoyment of the purely spiritual. 3. *We should feel thankful to Christ for introducing to us the true food of the soul.* He made our physical nature and provided for it; he made our spiritual nature and supplied it with proper nurture—the will of God. 4. *If we wish to become Christ-like, we must feed on the same meat as Christ.* If we wish to be God-like, we must do his will. Food has great influence on the growth of the soul. Inferior and adulterated food dwarfs it, causes it to grow downwards. Doing the will of God causes it to grow heavenwards. Holy activity whets the spiritual appetite and supplies it with nourishment. The soul feeds by doing, by activity, by the sweat of its brow. If we want to be benevolent, like Christ, we must not feed on ourselves, but the will of God—on the love of Christ and the welfare of our fellow-men.—B. T.

**Vers. 35—38.—The Christian harvest. Notice—**

I. ITS NATURE. It is spiritual. "Lift up your eyes," etc. To see the temporal harvest you look down and around, but to see this you must look up; it is in the spiritual region, and concerns the spiritual nature and interest of man. It is the harvest of souls—the harvest of Jesus' soul. It is spiritual in its processes, its sphere, its aim, and its results. It means the spiritual quickening, the germination, the growth, the cultivation and ripening of human souls. Think not that this world is only for material and physical purposes. Its chief end is the production of holy and perfect souls. And as the system of nature is adapted to produce different grains in perfection, so there is a spiritual system of Divine grace adapted to produce perfect souls.

II. THE OPERATIONS OF THE HARVEST. 1. *There are preparatory operations.* As in the material, so in the spiritual harvest, the soil of the soul is ploughed, cultivated, by warnings; by judgment and mercy, by Divine threatenings and promises; and the seed of the Divine Word is sown with much prayerfulness and tears, and then left in hope and anxiety. 2. *There are the secret, Divine operations.* Once the seed is deposited carefully in the soil, the husbandman can do nothing more but hope, watch, and trust. It is now in the custody of God; he alone can make it grow. The Christian husbandman can only commit the Divine seed to the soil; he must there leave it to the secret and quickening operations of the Holy Spirit. 3. *There are the subsequent Divine and human operations.* As soon as the seed begins to bud, it is partially given back to human care. As soon as the Divine Word begins to bud in repentance and faith, and grow in grace, it is at once, to some extent, under human discipline and supervision. The Divine and human operations join in its development and progress. 4. *These operations are very great and various.* There is infinite thought, sacrifice, and life, and there is much toil and labour, and there are various agencies. "One soweth, and another reapeth."

III. THE VASTNESS OF THE HARVEST. 1. *Vast in relation to space.* The space of the harvest is the whole earth. The field is the world. But there are fields. Human geography is recognized. "Look on the fields." Judæa, Galilee, and especially Samaria, were in the eye of Jesus now. Human geography fits in well with the Divine purposes. The whole earth is the Lord's farm, and the harvest covers it all; but it is well for the purpose of spiritual cultivation that it is divided into fields. Thus labour and vastness are distributed so as to suit finite comprehension and energy. Through the parts the whole will be reached. Field after field will be cultivated till the whole earth be covered with waving corn fit for harvest. 2. *Vast in relation to time.* It reaches from the first moment of the "day of grace" to the last, and in results stretch forward to the endless eternity. Men have a series of harvests, but Jesus has only one great harvest, embracing all time and all ages. 3. *Vast in relation to the labour and agencies employed.* These embrace all Divine, human, and angelic agencies from the first sower to the last reaper. Abel, Paul, and Luther worked in the same harvest. All the spiritual energy brought to bear upon this world belongs to the same. The

spiritual harvest is infinitely vast, its labour infinitely great, and agencies infinitely various.

IV. THE RIPENESS OF THE HARVEST. "Look on the fields; for they are white," etc. 1. *Whiteness is the colour of ripeness, the colour of the ripe corn. It is the colour of heaven. All is white there, for all is ripe and perfect. Ripeness, when applied to souls here, is used relatively. Its full meaning must be realized hereafter.* 2. *Souls are ripe to harvest when they begin to manifest a genuine concern for their spiritual welfare. Then they begin to blush with the first colour of ripeness, and naturally call for harvesting.* 3. *As in the natural harvest, so in the spiritual, some fields ripen more quickly than others. As in soils, so in souls, some bring forth fruit sooner than others. This was the case now in Samaria as compared with Judæa and even Galilee, and it is ever so.* 4. *There is a difference between the natural harvest and the spiritual indicated here. (1) In the natural there is ever a certain stated period between the sowing and the reaping. In the East there was generally four months. But it is not invariably the case in the spiritual harvest. There may be more than four months, and there may be less than so many hours. "The fields are white already." No sooner is the seed sown than it begins to germinate and grow. So it was in the Samaritan woman now, and others. (2) Men are entirely dependent on the appointed season of harvest. They cannot by any effort make it come a day sooner. It comes according to fixed laws. Not so the spiritual harvest. The servants of God, under him, may bring about a harvest of souls at any time. The Divine Spirit quickens and causes souls to grow and ripen through our earnest and faithful efforts. He blesses our earnest labour, so that the spiritual harvest is not limited by seasons and climates, but is carried on continually as we labour. There are fields ever white to harvest.*

V. THE REWARD OF THE HARVEST. "Receive wages," etc. 1. *The reward is partly present. Especially with regard to the reaper—in the fruit gathered, which is very precious; in the holy pleasure of doing the will of God, and saving souls.* 2. *The reward will be chiefly in the future. At the great harvest home. For the fruit is gathered unto life eternal. Every effort can only be fully rewarded at its final issues. The final issue of spiritual harvesting is "eternal life," which can only be fully enjoyed in the future.* 3. *The reward of the future will consist of the highest and greatest happiness. Like the joy of the harvest. (1) The happiness of a perfect life. Spiritual life, "life eternal." Can a man be happier than in the full enjoyment of all he can desire, and of all he is capable of? This will be reached in eternal life—the perfect ripeness of the soul, and the climax of being, the fulfilment of our sublimest hopes, and the reward of our best efforts with Divine interest. (2) The happiness of abundance. The thought of famine will be for ever buried in the consciousness of plenty. All the labourers in the harvest will be more than satisfied, and their satisfaction will leap into joy. (3) The happiness of safety. Like the joy of the harvest, when all the produce of the fields is secured, there will be the joy of personal salvation, and the salvation of all. Let the storm rage, and the rain descend in torrents,—all will be safe and infinitely happy in consequence. (4) The happiness of gratitude. Gratitude to the great Lord of the harvest, for all his defence and loving-kindness. After the "harvest home" there will be the great thanksgiving service. And it will be quivering with happiness and singing with joy. 4. *All will be rewarded. "He that soweth and he that reapeth." Every one that bestowed any labour on the harvest will be remembered. Even the most insignificant labourer will not be overlooked. 5. All will be rewarded simultaneously. "He that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together"—together in time, in place, in mutual benefit and reciprocity. There will be no partiality, no disadvantage, but as in the labour so in the joy of the harvest, every one shall help himself to the full. The lonely sower who ages ago sowed in tears without reaping scarcely any will suffer no disadvantage, but will be fully compensated—his joy will be all the more. Every one will be happy in himself and in others. All will be happy in the Lord of the harvest, the chief Sower and Reaper, and all will be happy in him. The joy of the redeemed throng will be really personal, but intensely mutual, so as to make one anthem of leaping joy. 6. *The reward will be everlasting. The fruit is gathered unto life eternal; and the happiness will be as eternal as the life, as lasting as the fruit. The fear of its coming to an end, even at the remotest period, shall never pass as a cloud over its bright disc, nor cause a discord in its ever-harmonious and thrilling music.***



**LESSONS.** 1. *Let us realize our relationship to all past and future agencies, that we may feel our indebtedness to the former, and our responsibilities to the latter.* We reap much which others have sown. Let us not be elated with pride, but with gratitude remember the tearful sowers. Let us sow faithfully, even if we reap not; and remember the reward and joy of the harvest. Let us leave the same legacy of fruitful labour to our successors as our predecessors left to us. 2. *Let us be very diligent in spiritual service.* It is harvest. And in relation to us is very short—it will be soon over. 3. *Let us be punctual and prompt.* "The fields are white." It will be too late soon. There is danger that some corn will spoil for want of timely harvesting. Procrastination is a besetting sin. We cannot say, "There are yet four months," etc. No; "the fields are white already." They call us now to work. 4. *Let us be very earnest and watchful.* "Lift up your eyes, and look," etc. Spiritual cultivation demands earnest and continual watchfulness. The spiritual eye should be keen, and ever on the look out on the old fields and new ones. Let us watch lest we lose an opportunity, lest the fields be riper than the husbandman—he green and they white. The harvest of souls—the harvest of Jesus—is infinitely great, important, valuable, and promising.—B. T.

**Vers. 6—15.—The fountain of living water.** I. **AN EVIDENT PHYSICAL NEED.** This chapter connects spiritual truth with one great physical need of men, even as ch. vi. connects spiritual truth with another great need. Both Jesus and the woman were exactly in the position to appreciate the value of water, and the opportunity of getting it easily and freely. Jesus is a thirsty Traveller; the woman is one who has frequent journeys from her home to get the indispensable supply for every day's needs. We cannot all get the same amount of good out of the conversation between Jesus and the woman. Those whose toil often makes them thirsty, and those who get their supplies of water with difficulty, they will be the people to relish the figure by which spiritual benefits are here set forth. Our very difficulty in profiting by this conversation should be a matter for thankfulness. If we are thirsty we very soon get a drink; and if others in their thirst ask from us, we very soon get them the requisite supply.

II. **AN UNFELT SPIRITUAL NEED.** This woman is an excellent specimen of a very large class. They feel the physical need so much that the spiritual need is altogether overlooked. It is little wonder that the woman talked as she did in this conversation. How was she to know, without a good deal of instruction and experience, whence Jesus came and what he meant? By this conversation, as well as other recorded ones of his, Jesus would evidently stir us up to consider whether there be not other wants just as necessary to be met in their way as the wants that are met by a supply of water. When we are hungry we all know the use of bread; when we are thirsty we all know the use of water; why is it, then, that we know not the use of Jesus? It is either that we have not yet felt the deeper thirst of the heart, or, having felt it, we do not yet understand how in Jesus alone that thirst can be effectually quenched. This woman was wholly and solely occupied with the idea of getting natural water more easily. Her journeys to the well must have been very frequent ones, and, though they might not be long ones, yet they might be quite enough to add very considerably to the toil and burden of the day. What a warning there is for us in this woman's gross spiritual ignorance, her inability to comprehend, even in the very least degree, what Jesus was talking about! She had come out to get as much water as she herself could carry back. There she stood before Jesus, and so ignorant was she of his mission and his power, that at the moment she could think of nothing better to ask him than the opening up of some natural fountain of waters such as would render needless any more toilsome journeys to Jacob's well.

III. **THE CONTINUAL READINESS OF JESUS TO SUPPLY ALL SPIRITUAL NEED.** He is weary with travel and heat, and needs rest. But the need of this ignorant, degraded woman is far greater than his, and, more than that, in speaking the words that may go far in instructing her as to her need, he speaks the words that may instruct many others also. The physical want of Jesus is soon supplied; a draught from Jacob's well will do that. But the want of the woman is not so easy to supply. It would be easy enough if she were only in the right state of mind; but, first of all, what ignorance, misconception, and wrong desires have to be removed! A deal has to be done for us before we care to appropriate our share in that fountain which, because of its unfailling

fulness, can do nothing else but leap forth to everlasting life. But what an encouragement to know that Jesus is so ready to do all when we are willing to have it done! If we are unsaved, unblest, unbelieving, unhoping, unloving, if no fresh, deep spiritual stream runs through our nature, it is because we keep away from the fountain that Jesus has opened up. It is not he who has to discover the need and make the preparation. Jesus has everything in perfect readiness so soon as the heart begins to feel its thirst.—Y.

**Ver. 24.—*The fallacy of holy places.*** I. **THE FALLACY EMPHATICALLY STATED.** Up to this point in the conversation the woman has not the slightest idea that religious matters are in question; but immediately on concluding that Jesus is a Prophet, she proceeds to show that she can talk about religion as well as other people. Jesus seeks to fasten her up in a corner where she may be dealt with according to her individual sin and individual need, and so she tries to escape away into a general discussion on an old point of difference that was altogether beside the question that should have had most interest for her. The fallacy of holy places is emphatically illustrated in the experience Jesus had of them. We see that he had experience of two places reckoned specially holy, Gerizim and Jerusalem. Truly the holiness of Gerizim had done little for this Samaritan woman; and the holiness of Jerusalem did little for those priests and Law-expounders who, in their fanaticism, put Jesus to death. Here is the paradox of a woman apparently unconcerned about her own misdoing, but very much concerned about the rightful localization of Deity.

II. **IT IS A FALLACY WHICH PREVAILS WIDELY AND DEEPLY STILL.** Jerusalem and Gerizim are still reckoned holy places, and to them, in the name of Jesus, how many more have been added! Special places, special forms, special symbols, special words, have been slowly exalted unto an honour and an influence they were never meant to obtain. Many who on no account would bow before an image, yet act as if Deity had a special dwelling and special surroundings. We do not make a sufficient distinction between what is necessary to us and what is acceptable to God. Holy buildings, holy forms, may have in them much value; but the value is for us, and not for God. If one can think of God esteeming some spots of earth holier than others, surely they are those where most has been done for the renewal and sanctification of men. We may learn a lesson from the obscurity into which the ark of the covenant fell. How it vanishes away with the departure of Jehovah's people into the Babylonian captivity!

III. **A FALLACY WHICH IS ONLY TO BE REMOVED BY A CONTINUAL REMEMBRANCE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD AND MEN.** God is pure Spirit. A thousand things which in themselves serve and gratify human beings because of their correspondence with human nature cannot serve and gratify God. The whole position is placed before us in the question, "Can I eat the flesh of bulls, and drink the blood of goats?" Incense from Sheba, and sweet cane from a far country, became abominable to Jehovah, because the people who offered them did not hearken to his words, and rejected his Law (Jer. vi. 20). We who have bodies must to some extent be served even as the beasts are served; but if we got nothing more we should soon be miserable. The higher and peculiar part of our nature has also to be amply served. That which is invisible in us is the most important thing; and that which we value most from others comes from what is invisible in them. How much more, then, when we are dealing with that Being who has in him no mixture of the bodily! We do give human beings something when we give to their bodies; but unless we give God the spiritual we give him nothing at all.—Y.

**Ver. 27.—*The astonishment of ignorance.*** These disciples marvelled that Jesus talked with a woman at all. Thus we have proof positive that this conversation occurred at an early stage of the ministry of Jesus. The disciples would soon cease to marvel at Jesus talking with women. What a difference the ministry of Jesus has made in the position of women! What an illumination and example are given by his treatment of them!

I. **THE DEGRADED CONDITION OF THIS WOMAN.** A condition, not because of something peculiar to her as an individual, but simply because she was a woman. Think of the work to which she was put, travelling away out of the city at the

noontide hour to get water at the well. Hard as her lot was, it was not peculiarly hard; she would not be worse off than most women of her acquaintance. Think, too, of the light thrown upon the life of woman in that place by the startling announcement of Jesus, "Thou hast had five husbands." Some of these, perhaps, had died, but some, possibly all even, had got tired of the wife, and made an excuse to send her away. Considering the need of the woman, the real marvel would have been if Jesus had remained silent with such a golden opportunity.

II. THE HELP JESUS GAVE HER. Take this woman as representative of the toiling, burdened woman everywhere. She has her own share in this world's work and weariness, and more than her own share in the world's monotony. Many women there must be who want refreshment and brightness, something to make life less mechanical, something to bring at least a bit of blue into the sky, a bit of sunshine into the room. Jesus, speaking to the woman of Samaria, speaks to such. It was irksome work for her coming "hither" daily to draw. So Jesus hints mysteriously at a new fountain of waters, gushing out with a fulness and force which indicated the exhaustless stores within; and so the poor woman, thinking but of her daily toil, begs for this water that she may thirst not, neither come to draw. Yet this was the request Jesus did not comply with. She still would have to take her daily journey to Jacob's well. Jesus helped her otherwise; even spiritually, one hopes that, after getting so much instruction and so many explanations, this wearied woman did have opened up in her heart the well of water springing up to everlasting life. If so, then for ever she would have to bless the journey to the well. Her load of daily duties was not diminished in itself, but practically it was diminished, because her strength was increased. Thus Jesus would help all women. He is far above the limitations of sex. The marvel now is that women will not come and talk with Jesus, seeing he is a Helper still wherever the faith and obedience are found that make his help available.—Y.

Ver. 34.—*The purpose of Jesus in eating.* I. THE RESOURCES OF JESUS. The disciples had left their Master by the well, wearied, hungry, and thirsty, while they went to the city near by to get some food; certainly they would stay no longer than they could help, seeing Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. Returning to Jesus, they are astonished to find a change in his appearance. He looks fresh and satisfied. Jesus had ways for recruiting bodily strength and receiving bodily nourishment, such as lie beyond us. He was not hedged in by our limitations, though, as a general rule, he kept within them. Whatever nourishment there be in the customary channel of bread, God can send through some secret and special channel, if there be sufficient reason. And such a reason there was here. A weary, exhausted man could not talk to the woman of Samaria as she needed to be talked to. Jesus would always put himself in the best possible state physically for doing the Father's will and finishing his work.

II. THE PURPOSE IN EATING. Every human being, because he is a reflecting and responsible being, is bound to consider the why and wherefore of every voluntary act. Jesus eats that he may satisfy hunger, but, when the hunger is satisfied, he seeks in the strength thus gained to go on fulfilling the great purpose of his life. Jesus tells us the purpose underlying every meal that he took. He was no ascetic, no imitator of John as to his food; doubtless he sat down at times in the company of gluttons and wine-bibbers, but all the while he would make it plain that he did not eat and drink just to gratify appetite. We are not to eat as the brute beasts, conscious of a recurrent need and a recurrent pleasure, but with no purpose beyond serving the present bodily need, receiving the present bodily pleasure. When good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both, be sure that adds to the responsibilities of life. Having the health that comes from a sound and vigorous stomach, it will be required from us according to our health. It is a shame to see some in health and strength, using it all in selfish pleasure, while others, whose life is one constant struggle against disease and pain, yet manage to work on for God and Christ, their hearts unwearied, however wearied their bodies may be.

III. THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS IN THIS MATTER. He used what health and strength he had to do the will of him that sent him. One feels that he must have been a thoroughly healthy man in body. We read of him being wearied; we never read of him being ill. That there should be in him great fulness of physical life is

just what we might expect. He who requires us to use health and strength in doing the will of God, first of all so used health and strength himself. And how we benefit by the result of all this! There was much work to be done; Jesus was capable of much work, and so he did it. There was no wasted effort and energy; all his conversations and dealings with men were directed to a certain aim. Where should we have been, if he had not bent every energy and thought of life to the finishing of his Father's work? All things had to be made subordinate to the mission. Jesus was speaking fresh from the gladness and encouragement he had got, because of his talk with the Samaritan woman. He who pointed his disciples to the fields white to harvest had done some reaping by that very talk; and he wants his disciples to aim at reaping also. We must have the bread that perisheth, and it will not come like the sunshine and the rain—we must work to get it. But always beyond the bread and the pleasure of eating, and the strength to which the eating ministers, there must be the service of God. Even in a matter of routine and habit, like eating and drinking, let us aim to do the will of him who made us and saved us, and get strength for doing such work as may be useful in his kingdom.—Y.

Vers. 35—38.—*The two harvests.* I. A SEARCHING LOOK INTO THE PAST. There can be little doubt that, when Jesus said the fields were white already to harvest, he meant his disciples to consider the company of Samaritans eagerly coming out of the city towards them. Why were they coming? Jesus knew that the coming was not sufficiently explained by saying that the woman's report had stirred up the curiosity of the people in the city. Jesus rejoiced in the fresh proof he had got of how people everywhere were waiting for the Messiah. Even the Samaritan was waiting, and, if the Samaritan, how much more the Jew! People were ready to run in any direction where they might find one to answer their expectations. And Jesus looked upon this expectant state of mind as the harvest of what had been sown long ago. He did not forget his Father's faithful messengers in ages past, with their testimonies, messages, and predictions. And so we may be sure Jesus would ever have us consider how the present is the result of the past. The valuable and gladdening things we have to-day did not spring up all in a night. This faith in a coming Messiah had been growing for generations. At first the faith of only a few, it had come to be the faith of more, and then the faith of all.

II. THE PECULIAR WORK OF THE DISCIPLES. They had to be in readiness for a people who, more or less, were ready for them. When harvest-time comes, how the reapers are on the look out! Reaping is not like some sorts of work, it cannot be spread over a long term. And these disciples were to be just as reapers, co-reapers with Jesus himself. If the farmer has a large extent of ground under corn, he cannot reap it all with his own hands; he must have helpers proportioned to the ground that has to be covered. While Jesus was in the body of his humiliation, he worked with bodily restrictions upon him. Hence the need of colleagues who could do what he was not able to do himself, going forth each one of them, specially authorized and endowed to communicate the blessings of the Christ to needy and eager Israel. We must ever be on the look out for harvest-work.

III. A PATHETIC ELEMENT IN AGRICULTURE. Of all who go out to sow in the sowing-time, not all survive to the harvest-time. This must happen every year, and so no proverb is more likely to start into utterance than that which speaks of the sower being one, and the reaper another. But when Jesus comes to dilate on the higher harvest, he speaks of a state of things where nearly always the sower is one, and the reaper another. The necessity of the case makes it so. Superstitions and traditions have to be overthrown. But when the sower for God well understands that he cannot also reap, then all is right. He does his work with his own joy in the doing of it; he does the work into which God has put him; he is sure of the equity, nay more, of the love, of his Master; and thus he is sure also that the due reward will duly come. The sower and the reaper will rejoice together; and what a new, unimaginable experience that will be! Here sowers have a measure of rejoicing together, and reapers a measure of rejoicing together; but the sowers and reapers must be all together, looking upon the work before they can see it in all its wisdom and fulness. The earliest prophet of the old covenant must clasp hands with the latest servant of the new.—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

## CHAPTER V.

Here commences the second Exposition of the Gospel (ch. v.—xi.)

II. THE CONFLICT WITH THE CHOSEN PEOPLE IN JERUSALEM, GALILEE, AND JERUSALEM, TO THE DEATH-SENTENCE RECORDED BY THE SANHEDRIN.

Vers. 1—47.—1. *Christ proved, by signs and wonders and testimonies, to be Source of life.*

Vers. 1—9.—(1) *A sign on a paralyzed body and an unsusceptible soul.*

Ver. 1.—The journey to Jerusalem is said to have taken place at the time of "a feast," or "the feast of the Jews."<sup>1</sup> After these things (*μετὰ ταῦτα*). Suggesting a number of events, not necessarily connected with each other. (For the latter idea of a period expressed by *μετὰ ταῦτα*, see ch. ii. 12 and xi. 7, 11; for *μετὰ ταῦτα*, see ch. vi. 1 and xxi. 1, etc.) There was the feast of the Jews. Now, "the feast" of the Jews could hardly be any other than the second *Passover*, while ch. vi. 4 would indicate a third. "The feast" referred to in ch. iv. 45 undoubtedly means the first *Passover*. "A feast" would leave the question open, though by no means excluding positively the second *Passover*, as the anarthousness of the word might be chosen with a view to call special attention to it. However, the indefinite *ἐορτή* has been identified by commentators with every feast in the calendar, so there can be no final settlement of the problem. If the feast be the *Passover*, then our Lord's ministry lasted a little more than three years. If not, it must be one or other of the feasts that elapsed between the *Passovers* of ch. ii. and ch. vi. Edersheim, with many others, refuses to accept any chronological hint in ch. iv. 35, and therefore throws the journey from Jerusalem to Galilee a few weeks after the first *Passover*, in the early summer, and supposes that Jesus returned to the unnamed feast in the autumn. Several critics say of ch. iv. 35, one part of the sentence must be

paraboli cal and the other literal, and that the disciples might be anticipating a spiritual harvest after four months, and Jesus drew from the physically ripening corn-fields his comparison. This seems to me entirely contrary to our Lord's ordinary method; and that the disciples were in too carnal a mood to be credited with an anticipation of spiritual results in Samaria at all. Those who think that ch. iv. 35 does give a hint of four months preceding harvest, place the journey between the middle of December and the middle of January. To my mind there is consequently no difficulty in imagining that when those four months should have been spent, and before the regular calling and appointment of the twelve apostles, our Lord should have gone up to the feast—one of the feasts which did summon the adult men to the metropolis. This is the view of Irenæus, Luther, Grotius, Lampe, Neander, Hengstenberg, Conder, and many others. Wieseler, Hug, Meyer, Lange, Godet, Weiss, Farrar, Watkins, think that the Feast of Purim, celebrated on the 15th of Adar (or March) (2 Macc. xv. 36), in commemoration of the deliverance of the people from the evil intention of Haman (Esth. ix. 21, etc.), was that national fast and feast which Jesus thus honoured. Purim was not one of the divinely appointed festivals, but it is also stated that the Lord undoubtedly attended one of the national and recently appointed festivals, that of Dedication (ch. x. 22). The more serious objection is that it could, if desired, have been celebrated quite as well in Galilee as in Jerusalem, and that the method of celebration seemed contrary to the whole spirit of the Master, and the whole tone of the discourse which followed. It is said that part of the ritual of the feast was the free and frequent gifts made spontaneously by one to another. Westcott prefers the autumn Feast of Trumpets as more suitable on several grounds than the *Passover*, (1) because of the absence of the article,—this, however, is very problematical (see Tischendorf, 8th edit.); (2) because when at the Feast of Tabernacles (ch. vii. 2) the incident described in ch. v. is still in lively recollection; (3) because the great events of the Feast of Trumpets, the commemoration of the Creation and the Law-giving, correspond with the theme of the Lord's great discourse. The fact that this particular miracle on the sabbath should be referred to a few months later in Jerusalem, on Christ's third appearance there, is not improbable, if we bear in mind that Judæan emissaries in Galilee had been bitterly as-

<sup>1</sup> Ἡ ἐορτή stands in Tischendorf (8th edit.), with N, C, E, F, etc., and fifty cursives, Coptic, Sahidic. But R.T., Tregelles, Alford, place the ἡ in the margin, and follow in text A, B, D, G, K, etc., and Origen's express mention of the anarthous form and the difficulties involved in it. On the other hand, Irenæus discusses the point, and regards the feast here mentioned as the *Passover*.

sailing Jesus, on the ground of his persistent determination to heal sickness and hopeless maladies on the sabbath day. This Jerusalem "sign," and the claim he made on the ground of it, had roused the cry, and was still the matter of contention. The claims of the Purim feast turn principally on the fact that, since it occurred, about a month before the Passover, on the 14th or 15th of Adar, this visit might have taken place in the course of the four months referred to in ch. iv. 35, and therefore between the sojourn in Samaria and the Passover of ch. vi. 4, which Jesus did not attend. Dr. Moulton (assuming the anarthrous form of the *ἐορτή*) thinks that the feast is left undetermined because there was nothing in it typical of our Lord's work, and fulfilled in his Person. Such a position renders the visit itself strange and apparently uncalled for. These long gaps, silences, during which there is no record of event or discourse, constitute a leading feature of the gospel history, and indeed of most of the history of both Old and New Testaments. To my mind there is advantage rather than otherwise in supposing more time than a few months to have been consumed in the Galilean ministry described in Mark ii. and iii. Tregelles and the Revisers, with Westcott and Hort, have relegated the *δευτεροπρώτων* of Luke vi. 1 to the margin, but Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Canon Cooke, etc., retain the remarkable expression, on the overwhelming evidence of a host of authorities. If it stand, which we believe it must, then during the Galilean ministry, and in the interval which preceded the Passover mentioned in ch. vi. 4, there is a reference to the proximity of a previous Passover and a previous harvest; the Galilean opposition to Christ on this question of ritual being at its very height. If so, the feast must have been the Passover. The question cannot be finally settled, and commentators are in hopeless conflict with one another. It must be admitted that the majority of modern critics assume the Feast of Purim to be that intended, and thereby reduce the length of our Lord's ministry from Cana to Calvary to two short years. And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. This was before the formal call of the twelve apostles, and there is no proof that he was accompanied by his disciples. Many of the commentators (and see Weiss, 'Life of Christ,' vol. ii. 321) urge that not even John himself was present on the occasion, from the absence of lifelike touches and particularity of incident. There is, however, much detail in the first fifteen verses. The great discourse that follows is not broken into dramatic dialogue, and does certainly present more of the biographer's subjective treatment than other portions of the nar-

ative. It is more conceivable, however, that John did, on grounds mentioned by Caspari (see Introduction), accompany his Lord, and learned, by what he heard of these great words, and by subsequent converse with Jesus, the burden of the mighty revelation. Thoma sets to work in the most dogmatic way, and Weiss with a perfectly different spirit, to demonstrate the identity of the narrative which follows, with the famous story of the cure of the paralytic "borne of four" which occurs in the synoptic narrative. Thoma goes further, and imagines that the supposed healing of the paralytics by both Peter and Paul are also here idealized.

Ver. 2.—Now there is in Jerusalem. A phrase denoting intimate acquaintance with the topography of the city, and the present tense suggests either a hint of a ruin yet existing after the fall of Jerusalem, or it may betray the fact that the evangelist wrote down at the very time some details of the incident which formed the occasion of the following discourse, and never, in his later editing of the document, omitted or altered the form of his sentence. At the sheep (*market*) or (*gate*) a pool, sur-named in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes or porches. The adjective *πρωβατικῇ* requires some substantive to be introduced, and since there is no reference to any sheep-market in the Old Testament, little justification can be found for the gloss contained in the Authorized Version. There was a "sheep-gate" mentioned in Neh. iii. 1, 32 and xii. 39. There is no reason against this method of supplying the sense, except this, that there is no other instance of the word *πάλη*, or "gate," being omitted after this fashion. The "sheep-gate" stood next, in Nehemiah's recital, to the "fish-gate," and it was built by the priests. The old "sheep-gate" is now known by the name of St. Stephen's Gate, to the north of the Haram es-Sherif, or temple area, from which the path leads down into the valley of the Kedron, and if "gate" be the proper term to add to *πρωβατικῇ*, and we have its site fixed by the modern St. Stephen's Gate, then we must look for the pool sur-named Bethesda in that vicinity. Eusebius and Jerome speak of a *piscina probatica* as visible in their day, but do not determine its site. Robinson ('Bibl. Researches,' i. p. 489) did not accept the identification of the sheep-gate with St. Stephen's Gate, and places the former more to the south, and nearer to what is now called the Fountain of the Virgin. This fountain, on Robinson's visit, displayed some curious phenomena of periodical and intermittent ebullition, receiving a supply of water from another source. It was found by Robinson to be

connected by a tunnel with the fountain of Siloam, and the relations of these wells have been quite recently submitted to fresh examination ('Palestine Expl. Soc. Rep.' Oct. 1883). Robinson identified this pool with "Solomon's Pool" of Josephus and "King's Pool" of Nehemiah, and thought it might be the original pool of Bethesda. Neander and Tholuck incline to agree with him. The observations of Robinson have been confirmed by Tobler, and at least show that what certainly happens now in some of these fountains may have been phenomena constantly expected at some other fountain bearing the name now before us, on the north-eastern side of the Haram area. Within the (sheep-gate) St. Stephen's Gate the traditional site of Bethesda is pointed out. The modern name is *Birket Israel*, and this tank, from the accumulation of rubbish, does not now show its original extent; neither does it now hold water, but receives the drainage of neighbouring houses (Colonel Wilson in 'Pict. Palestine,' vol. i. pp. 66, 106—109). A church, near that of St. Anne, was built by the Crusaders over a well, in this immediate vicinity—a spot which was supposed to be the site of the angelic disturbance. Colonel Wilson prefers this traditional site to that fixed upon by Robinson. So also Sir G. Grove, in Smith's 'Bible Dict.' *The five porches*, or porticoes, may have been a columnar structure of pentagonal form, which sheltered the sick and the impotent folk. At present no indubitable relic of this building has been discovered. Alford (7th edit.) quotes a letter which makes it probable that Siloam was Bethesda, and the remains of four columns in the east wall of that pool, with four others in the centre, show that a structure with five openings or porches might easily have been erected there. *Bethesda*, which is said to be the Hebrew (that is, Aramaic) surname of the pool, is very doubtful. Probably this is the correct form of the text, though there are many variants, such as *Bethzatha*, in N, 33, Tischendorf (8th edit.); *Bethsaida*, in some versions and Tertullian. It seems generally allowed that its significance (בֵּית הַחַסְדִּים) is "house of grace or mercy," and that it derived its reference from the dispensation there of God's providential gifts. The healing virtue of waters charged with iron and carbonic acid and other gas is too well known to need reference, and the remarkable cures derived from their use may account for every part of the statement which was here written by John. Eusebius speaks of these waters as "reddened," so he thought, with the blood of sacrifices, but far more probably by chalybeate earth.

Ver. 3, 4.—In these (porches) lay a mul-

titude of sick folk, blind, lame, withered, [waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel went down season by season into the pool, and troubled the waters: he then that first stepped in after the troubling of the water became whole of whatsoever disease he had].<sup>1</sup> The interesting gloss discussed below conveys the idea of magical cure, without moral significance, and attributes such cure to angelic ministry. This is the natural and popular explanation of the Bethesda healings, and would easily occur to a copyist who has not taken pains to use New Testament diction. Wünsche quotes from 'Chulin,' fol. 105, b, a testimony that "deadly qualities of water were attributed to demons, and healing ones to the angels." The crowds which gather in all countries round medicinal and intermittent springs are still unable to explain their curative quality by scientific analogies; and there is nothing more likely to have suggested itself to the mind of a copyist than the intervention of an angel. The absence from Scripture elsewhere of non-moral miracles is powerful internal reason for the lack of authenticity for the poetic gloss. The text, when deprived of this dubious gloss, loses all character that is inconsistent with the authenticity of the narrative. The close of ver. 3, "waiting for the moving of the waters," is far better attested than ver. 4, and, moreover, is con-

<sup>1</sup> The passage here marked in brackets is almost certainly an ancient gloss upon the text, introduced to explain ver. 7. Lachmann retained it on strong authority of A, C<sup>2</sup>, E, F, G, T, Δ, etc., several versions and definite references to it by Tertullian ('De Baptismo,' v.), Didymus, and Cyril; but there are great fluctuations in the elements of the text, some manuscripts giving *Κυρίου* after *ἄγγελος*, others omitting it, *κατέβαινε* interchanged for *καθέρχεται* and *ἐλούετο*. The words themselves contain a number of *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα*. Thus *κίνησις*, *κατὰ καιρὸν*, *δήποτε*, *νόσημα*, *ταράττω*, and *ταραχή* in the sense of troubling waters, are not elsewhere found in the New Testament. The manuscripts D, 1, 33, retain the last clause of ver. 3, while they omit ver. 4, making it probable that this clause was first added, in order to explain ver. 7, and then by some subsequent hand enlarged into ver. 4. The great authorities, N, B, C, D, Thebaic, Memphitic, Syriac, Vulgate Versions, all omit the entire passage; so that Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Tregelles, Alford, Olshausen, Lücke, Godet, as well as Westcott and Hort, reject it. Reuss says it is "vainly" repudiated, as though critics had merely acted here in an apologetic spirit. Thoma does not allude to critical difficulty, but finds mystical meaning natural to "the Johannist."

sistent with John's manner, and with well-ascertained matters of fact; and the clause would give authentic ground for the gloss that follows. Hoffmann and Hengstenberg defend the passage, and believe that "the angel of the waters" in the Apocalypse betrays the same hand. But there can be no fair comparison between an historical fact and a symbolical figure.

Ver. 5.—And a certain man was there, who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity. He had not lost all his powers—he crawled probably from some near home to the healing well; but for thirty-eight years he had been dragging out his impotent existence. The length implies the inveteracy of the disease. Hengstenberg, Wordsworth, Westcott (in part), imply a marked correspondence between these thirty-eight years and the similar period of time during which Israel was compelled to wander in the wilderness. It is not said how long the man had lain in the five porches waiting listlessly for healing, but that the malady was of old standing, and to all human appearance incurable. Thoma finds allegorical meaning in "Bethesda"—a synonym of the metropolis, and keeps up a series of comparisons with Acts iii.

Ver. 6.—When Jesus saw him lying there, and perceived (came to know by his searching glance and intuitive knowledge of the history of others) that he had during a long time already been (*in that condition, or in sickness,*) said unto him—spontaneously, in the royalty of his benefactions, not demanding from the man even the faith to be healed, and dealing with him almost as he did with the dead—Wilt thou be made whole? The leper came beseeching him, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The leper was quite sure of his own intense desire for cleansing, and all he questioned was the *will*, not the *power*, of Jesus. The admission of the power was a tacit cry for healing. The questioning of Jesus on this occasion involved an offer of mercy. "*Dost thou verily wish for health and strength?*" The question implies a doubt. The man may have got so accustomed to his life of indolence and mendicancy as to regard deliverance from his apparent wretchedness, with all consequent responsibilities of work and energy and self-dependence, as a doubtful blessing. He whined out, with professional drawl, his oft-told story, reflecting very much upon his lovelessness and quarrelsomeness, and ugly temper. There are many who are not anxious for salvation, with all the demands it makes upon the life, with its summons to self-sacrifice and the repression of self-indulgence. There are many religious impostors who prefer tearing open their spiritual wounds to the first passer-by, and hugging

their grievance, to being made into robust men upon whom the burden of responsibility will immediately fall. In this case the sign of his palsied nature was written upon his face, and was probably known to every passer-by.

Ver. 7.—The sick (impotent) man answered him, Sir,<sup>1</sup> I have no man, when the water has been troubled, to put me<sup>2</sup> into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. This implies that some special advantage accompanied the troubling of the water. The sudden escape of the medicinal gas may have soon subsided, and, with it, the special virtue of the well. The difficulty which the sick man found in reaching the point of disturbance may be accounted for in many ways. The steps which led into the water; the weakness of the sufferer, which made it an impossible task without help; the eagerness of many other impotent folk to take advantage of the supposed cure, jostling one another with selfish haste; or the absence of any personal friend to fight his battle for him, and cast him (*βάλην*) with the required plunge into water. The last point may be explained on the supposition that he was a comparative stranger in Jerusalem, and had made no friends; or by another, which several other allusions justify, viz. that he was a man who, from some reason or other, could neither make nor retain friendship. The melancholy recital of his frequent disappointment is given with an air of mendicant resignation—a kind of morbid satisfaction with his lot. The phrase, "while I am coming, another," etc., implies that he could move, if slowly, without help. The moroseness of self-dependence characterizes some sufferers, who rather glory in isolation than lament it. Still, the words express the hopelessness of thousands who, for lack of human help, are jostled out of life, peace, and salvation.

Ver. 8.—Jesus saith to him, Rise, take up thy bed (*κράββατόν σου*)—thy mattress or pallet; the word is said to be of Macedonian origin, it is Latinized in the Vulgate into *grabbatus*, and is not unfrequently found in the New Testament (Mark ii. 4, 9; vi. 55; Acts v. 15; ix. 33); the ordinary Greek word *σκεῦτος*, *σκεμπτόδιον*—and walk. These are in part the identical words which Jesus addressed to the paralytic (Mark ii. 9). He did not touch him or use any other means than his own life-giving word to confer the cure. He put forth, in royal might and spontaneous unsolicited exertion, the miraculous force.

<sup>1</sup> Some manuscripts and Fathers (C<sup>o</sup>, E, F, G, H, 33, Syriac) read *ναί* before *Κύριε*.

<sup>2</sup> *βάλην* is adopted by recent editors in preference to *βάλλην* by the almost unanimous consent of the uncial manuscripts,



The energy of the Lord's will mastered the palsied will of the sick man, and infused into him the lacking energy. Archdeacon Watkins supposes that the man did possess incipient and recipient faith, moved by the generous tenderness and sympathetic interest of the Stranger in his case. The very striking fact mentioned in the synoptic cure of the paralytic, viz. that he was borne into the presence of Jesus by four friends, ought to have prevented Thoma's caricature of criticism, which makes this narrative a mere idealization of that.

Ver. 9a.—And immediately<sup>1</sup> the man became whole (well, sound in health), and took up his bed, and walked. This act of obedience was an act of faith, as in every other miracle upon paralyzed nerves and frames. The imagery of the sign explains the *rationality* of faith. The impotent man, the paralytic, and the man with withered hand, were severally called by Christ to do that which without Divine aid seemed and was impossible. The spiritual quickening of the mind was communicated to the ordinary physical volition, and the bare act was a method by which the palsied sufferer took hold of God's strength. Faith always lays hold thus of power to do the impossible. The words and the result are similar to those adopted on the cure of the paralytic. This is another instance of the identity of the Christ of John and of the synoptists. The various efforts of Strauss, Baur, and Weiss to identify this miracle with that wrought on the paralytic is, however, in defiance of every condition of time, place, character, and consequences. The energy of faith and love which led the Galilean sufferer to secure the services of four stalwart friends, not only to carry him, but to make strenuous efforts to bring him into the presence of Jesus, contrasts powerfully with the loneliness and friendlessness of the impotent man; and the method adopted by the Lord to convey his grace, and the discussion that followed on that occasion touching the power of the Son of man to forgive sins, all suggest profoundly different circumstances. Nothing but the claim of the critic to be entirely superior to the document he is interpreting can account for so wild a conjecture.

Ver. 9b—16.—(2) *The outbreak of hostility due to the breach of the sabbath law.*

Ver. 9b.—Now it was the sabbath on that day. The form of the expression implies that it was one of the festival sabbaths rather than the weekly sabbath. These days, however, received the same reverence, and were observed with nearly the same rites and restrictions, as the ordinary sab-

baths. This statement is the key-note of the great discourse which follows, and it is made to prepare the way for the subsequent incidents. *The Jews*; i.e. the authorities, either the rabbis or Sanhedrists who were present in the crowd which gathered round the pool of Bethesda, or filled the neighbouring courts, are to be distinguished from "the multitude," or from the people generally. The designation evidently means the leading folk, the social censors, the hierarchy, who very soon displayed in marked fashion their jealousy and hatred of Jesus. The Jews therefore said to the man who had been healed, It is sabbath, and<sup>1</sup> it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. Judging by the letter of the Law (Exod. xx. 10 and xxxv. 3), and by the precedents of Scripture (Numb. xv. 32—35), and by the special injunctions of the prophets (Jer. xvii. 21—23; Neh. xiii. 15, etc.), the man was infringing a positive command. Rabbinism had indeed declared that, in cases affecting life and health, the law of the sabbath was legitimately held in abeyance; but this relaxation was so hedged about with restrictions that the poor man and the layman were unable to apply the rules. The rabbinic interpretations of the sabbatic law concerning burden-bearing were so intricate and sophistical that the entire majesty of the law, and the merciful intent of the prohibition, were concealed and vitiated. Apart from these complications, the man was *primâ facie* disobeying the letter of the law. 'Shabbath,' fol. 6, a, declares that if unwittingly a burden was carried on the sabbath, the transgressor was bound to bring a sin offering; if with knowledge, he must be stoned.

Ver. 11.—And he answered them, He<sup>2</sup> that made me whole, that very same man (*ἐκεῖνος*, "even he;" cf. for this use of the pronoun, ch. i. 18, 33; xiv. 21, 26, etc.) said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. This was justification for him. The Prophet-like Healer must know what was right, and upon his shoulders the responsibility must rest. There was a rabbinic saying, which the cured man may or may not have heard, that conferred a dispensing power upon a prophet; but the man could not have known with any certainty that such was Christ's official character. It is, moreover, clear that he did not know at this moment either the face, the voice, or the

<sup>1</sup> *Kal*, though omitted by T.R., finds place in N, A, B, C\*, D, and many other manuscripts, and numerous versions, and is adopted by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T.

<sup>2</sup> *Ὁς δὲ* is adied by R.T. and Tregelles, with A, B; but N, C, G, K, L, Δ, read *ὁ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη*, and N\*, *ὁ δὲ ἀπεκρίνατό*; and Tischendorf (8th edit.), Alford, Bâle Revisers, omit it, with T.R.

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf omits the *εὐθέως* with N\* and D.

name. Meyer hears a ring of defiance in these words. The other hints we obtain touching the man's character do not sustain such an idea.

Ver. 12.—[Then]<sup>1</sup> they asked him, Who is the man (contemptuous use of *ἄνθρωπος*, as distinct from God's great messengers, or the legislators and prophets of the olden time, who have laid down the eternal Law of God) that said unto thee, Take up [thy bed],<sup>2</sup> and walk? "The Jews" here ignore the work of healing and mercy, and seek to fasten a charge of overt criminality against some person unknown. A technical offence has been done against the honour of their sacred place. The work of healing is an insignificant compensation for such a disgrace. They would be even with the heretical healer. Saving men by questionable methods is not to be endured. "Who is the man?" "Men and women lying in moral helplessness, not helped by God's priests and rulers, are now standing and moving in the strength their new Teacher has given. They cannot deny it; but can they prevent it? The rabbinic precept which he has crossed shall be applied to stamp out his work and kill him" (Watkins).

Ver. 13.—Now he that was healed—in this place *ὁ ἰαθὲς* takes the place of *τεθεραπευμένος* of ver. 10.<sup>3</sup> The fundamental idea in the verb *θεραπεύω* is to render kindly and useful, even noble, service to another—to do the work and act the part of a *θεράπων*. The ministry rendered may be that of a *δούλος* or *ὑπηρέτης*, a *θάλπων* or *ἰατρός*. The "service" successfully rendered by a physician is more often expressed by *ἰδομαι*, which has no other meaning than restoration to health, and its use here may imply this positive fact (see the use of both words in Matt. viii. 7, 8)—knew not who it was (was at that time and for a while ignorant of the person of his Healer): for Jesus withdrew—after the healing. *Ἐκνέω* is "to nod or bend the head and avoid a blow," but comes to mean "withdraw" or "retire." Some have supposed that, like *ἐκνέω*, to "escape by swimming from a danger," *ἐξέφυγε* means here "stealthily escaped"—a sense that it has in Eur.,

<sup>1</sup> *Ὅδν* is omitted in R.T., on the authority of N, B, D, although L, which generally follows N, here sustains A, C, T, Δ, etc., in its retention. Tregelles brackets; Tischendorf (8th edit.) omits.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of *ἄρον καὶ περιπάτει* imper., N reads here, and in vers. 11 and 12, *ἄραι καὶ περιπάτει*. The N, B, C, L, omit *τὸν κρᾶββατὸν σου*, and Revised Version and Tischendorf (8th edit.), etc., follow; Tregelles brackets.

<sup>3</sup> Tischendorf here reads, with D, b, l, δ *ἀσθενών*.

'Hipp.' 470, and elsewhere; but (as Grimm says) Jesus did not withdraw to avoid a danger which had not yet proclaimed itself, but to evade the acclamation of the multitude (see also Lange)—a crowd being in the place where the miracle had been wrought.

Ver. 14.—After these things (see ver. 1). Westcott thinks that a looser connection between the foregoing and subsequent events is denoted by *μετὰ ταῦτα* than by the expression *μετὰ τοῦτο*. Consequently, the persecution referred to in the remainder of the chapter may have occurred several days after the foregoing conversation. Jesus found him<sup>1</sup> in the temple. Some have inferred from this, the recognition by the healed man of the hand of God in his cure, and his desire to express his gratitude in the house of God by some appropriate conduct or service; and, granting this explanation, much charm is observable in the fact that Jesus found him, and found him there. The Lord's habit of visiting the temple, and the penetrating glance which he casts over all the frequenters of his Father's house might then fairly be deduced from the passage; but the motive of the man is quite conjectural. From the words of Jesus one might as reasonably suppose that the man was treading at the time on dangerous moral ground, making some kind of gain from his notoriety. The healing was, at least, imperfect until the man had learned its spiritual significance. Every gift of God is doubled in value when its source is recognized. God's signature on his own mercies gives them their true meaning. Christ found the healed man in the precincts of the temple, whether his motive was pure or mixed in going thither. And he said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole (hast become sound and healthy throughout thy physical system; cf. for the form of this description of his case, the query, ver. 6): no longer continue to sin. The form of the sentence points to something special and persistent in this man's habits, rather than to the general corruption of human nature. Christ's penetrating glance discovered all the hidden misery and bleeding wound and putrefying sore of the man's soul. Apart from the obliteration of the consequences of his bad life, and without a clean and free condition of things, the future would have proved hopeless, and deliverance from the yoke of fear and concupiscence impossible; but now this new chance is given. He was made whole, born again physically. As Naaman's flesh became like that of a little child, so this man—once bent, crippled, distorted by his self-indulgence, and now made whole—is to "sin no longer." It would not be

<sup>1</sup> N, Syriac (Curetonian), read here, *τὸν τεθεραπευμένον* instead of *αὐτόν*.

reasonable to conclude from this that Christ's doctrine, like that of Job's friends, involved the indissoluble connection of sin with sickness, or made the amount of pain in any case the criterion of individual sin. Our Lord repudiates this position in ch. ix. 3 and in Luke xiii. 1—5; but special calamities have unquestionably followed wrong-doing, and can, in many instances, be referred to obvious transgressions, to specific acts, or inveterate habits. The man's own conscience would respond to the charge. Jesus added: Lest a worse thing befall thee. There is, then, something worse than thirty-eight years of apparently hopeless wretchedness! Jesus said, even as reported by the apostle of love, the most terrible things that ever fell from human lips. The "sin no longer" makes it seem as though man's will could accomplish much (cf. Isa. i. 16, "Cease," etc.), and as though all the future of our life were, so far as human responsibility goes, dependent upon ourselves. We are to act as if it were. Let it be noticed that he who said, "Sin no more," said, "Rise up, take thy bed, and walk." Three things, which appeared utterly beyond the power of the impotent man, were, nevertheless, done by him through the grace of Christ, which he then and there appropriated.

Vers. 15, 16.—The man departed, and told<sup>1</sup> the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. Therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus, (*and sought to slay him*<sup>2</sup>), because he was doing these things on the sabbath. The motive of the man *may* have been one of gratitude, or may have arisen from a sense of duty, seeing that he had not answered the question of the Jews, and had been himself charged with doing the unlawful thing (Weiss). He *may* have sought to win from his interlocutors some reverence for his Healer; but everything points the other way. He was a loveless being; he seems to have been nettled by the charge and warning he had just received, and went with the name of his Benefactor on his lips to those who in his hearing had already condemned the Saviour's conduct. The connection is close between the two facts, viz. the man's eager implication of his Healer in the responsibility of his own act, which was said

by "the Jews" to be unlawful; and the course of cruel persecution and deadly hate which was there and then inaugurated against the Saviour of the world. The sixteenth verse represents a course of conduct on the part of the Jews which led to open conflict with the dominant party. Christ's view of the sabbath lay, indeed, in the heart of the old Law, and was even recognized by some of the wisest and noblest spirits of Judaism; but it ran counter to the current traditional interpretation, and out as with a sharp sabre through the knots and entanglement of the schools. It was the unpardonable sin that ideas and rules which sustained and fed the authority of the hierarchical party should be swept away as valueless and perilous accumulations, and as fungoid encrustations upon the Law of Moses. Weiss justly remarks that there is no colour for the charge that the fourth evangelist antedated the sabbath controversy, for Mark (iii. 6) shows that it had already commenced in Galilee. In ch. iv. 1—3 we see that the Pharisaic party distrusted Jesus; here we see that the authorities are in arms against him.

Vers. 17—47.—(3) *The reply of Jesus to the hostile Jews.* The discourse of the Lord Jesus, in reply to the persecuting spirit and deadly purpose of the Jewish authorities, is now given at length. There is a fulness and order and progress observable throughout of immense importance as establishing the sacred origin of the words. The simplicity of the style, quite Hebraic in its freedom from conjunctive forms, discriminates it from the Philonic presentation of certain analogous but different ideas. If, as Godet has remarked, we venture on the hazardous speculation that the prologue to the Gospel merely places before us the Philonic conception of ΘΕΟΣ and ΛΟΓΟΣ, making God to be the inconceivable, unapproachable, impersonal Essence, coming into activity in the ΛΟΓΟΣ, who is self-dependent, but who exhausts all the vitality and activity of the supreme Θεός, we may, with Reuss, find here what is contrary to both the prologue and to the views of the Divine Being, which repudiates the correlative subordination of the Son of God. But the prologue is based on the identity of nature between ΘΕΟΣ and ΛΟΓΟΣ, and the subordinate and yet eternal relation of the latter to the former. There is an infinite fulness of being and activity in the Father, who yet is and loves and energizes in

<sup>1</sup> R.T. and T.R. read ἀνγγειλε; there are several variants. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, with N, O, L, Syriac, Coptic, read εἶπεν.

<sup>2</sup> The authorities on which Westcott and Hort, R.T., Meyer, Tregelles, and Tischendorf (8th edit.) omit the clause, καὶ ἐζητοῦν αὐτὸν ἀποκτείνειν, are N, B, C, L, with 1, 33, 69, and certain other cursives, Vulgate, Curetonian Syriac, Coptic, etc. The phrase was probably drawn from ver. 18

all things through the ΛΟΓΟΣ, the MONOGENHΣ. It appears to us that precisely the same truth is taught here, but it is taught in terms derived from the consciousness of the Logos incarnate, and with reference to a part only of the operations of the Logos, viz. in the providential, redeeming, and quickening work of the Son. This narrative shows how actual revelations of the Logos were made through the human consciousness of him who was lifted up into the being of the Son of God, and who became the Interpreter of the Son to men. The prologue is built upon the discourse—is an inspired and transcendental generalization of the truths here and elsewhere announced. The discourse is the basis of the prologue in the thought of the evangelist. The originality of the discourse is conspicuous. Its theme shows it to be closely allied with the discussions which shortly after this created such fierce animosities in the synagogues of Galilee, whither his Jerusalem enemies pursued him. We shall find that there Jesus declared that "the Son of man was Lord of the sabbath," and was competent in that capacity to assert what was contained and involved in the sabbath. On another occasion he vindicated for his disciples the right to food on the sabbath (Mark ii. 23—28), (1) on the historic ground that the royal hero of the Old Testament was at liberty, in dire emergency, to eat the priest's shewbread, which narrow ritualism would have refused to starving laymen; (2) that his Person was a temple, and his service a temple-service, which would be a further justification of the conduct of the disciples, as priests in the temple, in their submission to the higher law of duties, "profane the sabbath and are blameless." The cures he persistently wrought on the sabbath were justified by the principle that it is lawful to do acts of kindness, to save life, to release the sin- and Satan-bound daughter of Abraham on the sabbath; and that such sabbath-keeping was part of the original significance of the day. Here the Lord takes the higher ground that he and the Father, in works of providence, healing, and life-giving, are one.

Vers. 17, 18.—(a) *The claim of special relation with the Father.*

Ver. 17.—But Jesus answered them (ἀπε-  
κρίνατο; here and ver. 19 are the only places

where the author uses this aorist, *My Father worketh hitherto; i.e. until now*; has not, has never, ceased from working. Some critics, eager for disparaging comment, have said "this is point-blank denial of the sabbath-rest of the Creator as exhibited in Gen. i., ii., and Exod. xx. But, on the contrary, it is the true exposition of those grand utterances. God through his Logos, the Father through his Son, did bring his strictly creative works to an end with the six days; but then he entered on the seventh day, the rest of his preserving, protective, reproductive energy; then he began to pursue his redeeming and quickening operations in all regions of his dominion. My Father worketh, energizes, until now. His "rest" is an infinite activity of wisdom and power, of righteousness and mercy. The true sabbath is this rest of God. Man has to enter into this rest, and co-operate with and utterly abandon himself to the will of God. Sabbath-keeping is the great symbol of such entire satisfaction with God. The activities from which man has to cease on the holy day are man's own, man's self-centred labours; but he, too, may combine the highest activity with profound repose. "*My Father worketh until now, and I work—I, who am his Instrument, his Word, his Manifestation, his Messenger, abstaining from all mere self-originated, self-poised, self-centering toil, I work with him, for him. I work obviously and visibly that you may see for yourselves what he has ever been doing silently and unobserved.*" Philo had said ('Leg. All.' i. 3) "that God never ceases to create, nor takes a holiday from his works;" and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (iv.) had grasped, as an echo of Christ's own teaching, the perpetuity of Divine rest through all the ages of work; but the naked thought here soars far above them both. The dawning of every day, the opening of the flowers, the flowing of the rivers, the sustenance of vegetable, animal, and human life, reveal through every moment of the age-long sabbath-rest, and on every sabbath-day, his intense and constant activity.

Ver. 18.—On this account (the διὰ τοῦτο is still further defined by the ὅτι) therefore the Jews were seeking the more (μᾶλλον, i.e. more than they had sought before he made use of this sublime expression) to slay him, because not only in their opinion, though very falsely, he was violating (i.e. dissolving the authority of) the sabbath. Jesus was actually placing the sabbatic law where it has remained ever since, giving it sanctions, beauty, and hold on conscience it had never known before. He was abrogating the petty restrictions and abolishing the unspiritual somnolence by which it had been characterized and misunderstood. But there was

another and more staggering charge which they were not at that moment able to condone. They sought the more to slay him because he was calling God his own (*ἰδιον*) Father, making himself equal to, on a level with, God. He did use the phrase, "my Father," with a marked emphasis. He did not say, "*our* Father, or *your* Father;" he assumed a unique relation to the Father. The inmost centre of the Divine consciousness in him thrilled through the human. Though he did not wear now the "form of God," but the "form of the Servant," yet the Servant knew that he was Son and Lord of all. The Divine Personality which had always wrought out the eternal counsels of the Father's will was working now on identical and parallel lines in the human sphere. There were senses in which the Lord Jesus was the own and only begotten Son of God. This was a hard saying. This placing of himself on a level with God was the blasphemy which the Jews resented. Jesus knew what he said, and saw the impression his words produced, and took no steps to correct it. Two classes of result naturally followed. Some said, "He blasphemeth," "He hath a devil," and the high priest subsequently, in reply to a similar utterance of the Lord, rent his clothes; but other some felt concerning him that the relation between him and the Father was, so far as they knew, absolutely unique. The author of this Gospel exclaimed, "He who 'was with God and was God' has been manifested in the flesh, and we saw his glory, the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father."

Vers. 19—29.—(b) *Christ vindicated his equality with the Father.*

Ver. 19, 20a.—(a) *He declares himself to be "the Son."*

Ver. 19.—Jesus therefore answered and said to them; i.e. replied to their secret thoughts, and to the sentiments of animosity and hostility which they did not conceal. He spake in language of extraordinary solemnity and august claim. The Verily, verily, with which he prefaced the opening sentence, and which he repeated (cf. vers. 24, 25, as in ch. iii. 3 and elsewhere) on subsequent occasions, denoted the high ground of authoritative revelation on which he took his stand. He proceeded, without a break or interruption, to assert, on the authority of his own consciousness, the true relation subsisting between *the Son* and *the Father*—the deep, eternal, sacred link between them; in essence and in affection, in work and function; and gave several illustrations of these matters, the verification of which was not beyond the capacity of his hearers. These he made the basis of the argument of ver. 23, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." What did he

wish "the Jews" to understand by "the Son"? Did he identify himself with the Son of whom he here speaks? Surely this is unquestionably the case, for the "answer" here given is one addressed to those who were seeking to slay him because he claimed for himself that God was "his own Father." He had said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He justified the true reverence he felt for the Father when using this language, by describing in various ways the functions, privileges, and work of "the Son." Is "the Son," however, here the Eternal Son, the Logos, before and independently of his incarnation? and are the doctrines here announced an appeal to a pre-existing belief in such a sonship on the part of his enemies, so that he is dealing, at least from vers. 19—23, with the internal relations of the *Godhead*? The references to the recent *ἐργον*, and the moral effects which are to be produced upon his hearers by further activity, make this view doubtful. Does he here speak simply of "the Son of man" in his purely dependent, servile capacity, and earthly manifestation? (Watkins.) We think not; for the deeds and functions of "the Son" are here so lofty and far-reaching that this interpretation is inadmissible. Therefore we conclude, with Meyer and others, that by "the Son" he did mean "the whole subject, the God-Man, the incarnate Logos, in whom the self-determination of action independently of the Father cannot find place." This view of "the Son" involves the continuity of the Logos-consciousness, and not its obliteration; nor is this (as Reuss urges, and even Godet appears in part to concede) incompatible with the Logos-doctrine of the prologue. The Son is not able to do anything from himself, in the great work of healing, life-giving, and redemption, except that which he seeth the Father doing. The Logos made flesh, the Son who has taken humanity up into his own eternal being, is ever in full contemplation of the Father's activity. He is in intimate and continuous and affectionate relations with the Father, who in this capacity has sent his Son to be the world's Saviour. He sees the Father's healing grace and omnipresent energy and ceaseless activity in regions where "the Jews" fail to discern them. The incarnate Son does not set up a rival throne or authority. He moves, lives, has his being, from the Father and not from himself.

Ver. 20.—For—the Lord introduces a reason, states a fact, which is calculated to make this vision of the Father's activity apprehensible to his hearers—the Father loveth (*φιλεῖ*) expresses strong personal, natural affection, *amat* rather than the *ἀγαπᾷ* or *diligat* of many other passages,

See notes, ch. xxi. 15 and iii. 35)<sup>1</sup> the Son, and he loveth him to such an extent that he sheweth him, making it therefore possible for him "to see"—all things that himself doeth. The Son has been from eternity and is now, notwithstanding his incarnate lowliness, the continuous Spectator of all the Father's doing in all hearts and lives, in all places of his dominion. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee." So stupendous a claim was never exceeded or transcended. "All things that himself doeth," shown and visible to One walking this world. The mind either rebels against or succumbs before such sublime and all-embracing knowledge. No neutrality is possible. If these were his words, then there is justification for the generalizations of the prologue.

Vers. 20b-29.—(8) *The greater works.*

Ver. 20b.—And greater works than these works of healing will he show him. Here the term *ἔργα* is used for the first time in this Gospel. It becomes the recognized phrase by which Christ describes what the world regards as "signs and wonders," "miracles" of power or grace; but it actually connotes the simple activity of God, the normal operation of his hand. Greater manifestations than physical quickening or revival, namely, the mighty changes of thought and life, the gifts of grace and peace, eternal life itself, are evermore proceeding. The Father will so show them that the Son will see and do them, and so bring them by revelation to your consciousness that ye may marvel. Christ will not say here that ye may believe, but that ye may look on confounded and astonished. This was the first effect of Christ's work—Christ's revelation of the Father's heart, Christ's demonstration of the Father's nearness and character. Westcott quotes the apocryphal saying of our Lord preserved by Clement of Alexandria, 'Str.' ii. 9. 45, "He that wonders shall reign, and he that reigns shall rest." The wonders of grace will never

be exhausted. New combinations, new transformations, new discoveries, new insight into the eternal love, will be effected by him whom God hath sent, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world (but see ver. 28).

Vers. 21-26.—*Greater works: (i.) the resurrection of the dead.*

Ver. 21.—For (*γὰρ*) introduces an illustration, a proof of the previous assertion, viz. that the eternal love of the Son would issue in such new marvels) as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. This is the most exhaustive expression of the Father's love and revelation to the Son. This thing the Son sees, and this same thing he will do, whether these Jews attempt to put any arrest upon his will or not. The majority of commentators regard vers. 21-27 as descriptive of the moral and spiritual resurrection of dead souls, and hold that a transition is made in vers. 28, 29 to the resurrection of dead bodies and the final consummation. There are some, however, who regard the whole passage—even vers. 28, 29—as referring, with the previous verses, to *moral* resurrection, although the words, "in their tombs" (*ἐν μνημείοις*), are there added to give distinctness and explicitness to that future resurrection; and though "now is" of ver. 25 is not there predicated or repeated. Others (with many of the older expositors) refer the entire passage to the *final* resurrection, which, however, is incompatible with ver. 20 and with the "now is" of ver. 25. Others, again, see in ver. 21, in *ἐγείρει* and *ζωοποιεῖ*, the whole process of resurrection and renewal, both physical and moral, bodily and spiritual. They suppose that in ver. 25 Christ refers first to the spiritual renovation, to be affirmed and consummated in the universal resurrection and judgment of the last day. The generality of the terms *ἐγείρει* and *ζωοποιεῖ*, attributed to the Father, makes it possible that the Lord was referring to the numerous events of uplifting from the pit, from the lowest *sheol*, which formed the staple religious nutrition of the Jewish race. The history of Divine revelation is one lengthened series of interpositions and deliverances, of resurrections of the people of Israel, and of the theocracy from bondage, exile, and spiritual and civil death, and of references to the wonderful transformations of saints and prophets and kings from the depths of despair to the light of life and Divine favour. Ezekiel (xxxvii.) had likened the most memorable of these resurrections to the uprising of a huge army from a valley of vision, strewn with the dry bones of both houses of Israel. "So also," says Jesus, "the Son quickeneth," including

<sup>1</sup> The first word, *φίλειν*, occurs thirteen times in this Gospel—once of the Father's love to the Son (here), and of his love to those that love the Son (ch. xvi. 27); three times of the love of Jesus to his disciples (ch. xi. 3, 36; xx. 2); six times of their love to him (ch. xvi. 27; xxi. 15, 16, 17, twice); and twice in other connections (ch. xii. 25; xv. 19). It does not occur in the Epistles. *Ἀγαπᾶν* occurs thirty-seven times in the Gospels, thirty times in the Epistles, to denote all these relations, but the love indicated by this word is that which is generated by respect, confidence, and admiration ('Littmann, "Syn. in N.T.," Trösch, 'Syn. of Gk. Test.').

under this term, it may be, the physical healing which is often the precursor and condition of spiritual awakening and moral health and vigour. The Son, the incarnate Logos, revealing himself on earth, both as Logos and Son of man, *is now quickening after the same fashion whom he will*. The will of Christ is in such entire harmony with the Father's will that there is no rivalry here. The will of the Son is in spontaneous accord with the Divine purpose of resurrection and quickening. He is already doing thus here on earth, as the great organ of the Father, that which makes his will the revelation of the Father. There is no arbitrary decree, such as Calvin found here, nor such as Reuss insists upon. The emphasis is simply upon the subject of the verb *θέλει*; and we have in the expression a vindication of the nineteenth verse, "The Son doeth that which he sees the Father doing." His own *θέλημα* being the origin and revealed centre on earth of Divine manifestations.

Ver. 22.—That *ὅς θέλει* is the point of connection with what follows, and that the Son quickeneth whom he willeth, is more clear, seeing that (*γὰρ*) the Father even judges no man; judges no man apart from the Son. "Pater non iudicat solus nec sine filio, iudicat tamen (ver. 45; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. iii. 6)" (Bengel). The word *κρίνει* does not mean exclusively either "condemn" or "acquit," but the exercise of judicial functions which will either acquit or condemn. As in ch. iii. 17, the "condemnation" is rather *inferred* than asserted. Moreover, we are there told that the Son was not sent into the world for the purpose of judgment, but for the larger purposes of salvation, and "to give eternal life." Nevertheless, "life" to some is judgment to others, and judgment even unto death is the obverse of the gift of life when the conditions of life are not found. In ch. i. 39 Christ declares that one solemn consequence of his coming was *εἰς κρίμα*, "unto judgment"—to reveal the final decisions of the Judge. How, then, shall we reconcile these apparently incongruous statements? Judgment unquestionably results from the rejection of the proffer of mercy. The judgment rests on those who say, "We see." Their sin remaineth. Those who are not willing to be made whole remain unhealed. Those who love darkness rather than light abide in the darkness. This is the judgment, but this judicial process was (not the end, but) the consequence of his mission. The Father's ordinary providence, which is always passing judgment upon the lives of men, is now placed in the hands of "the Son." Howbeit he hath given the whole judgment—*i.e.* the judgment in all its parts—to the Son. He

has made the entire juridical process which brings to light the essential tendencies of human hearts, issue from the reception given by man to the Son. The whole question of right against wrong, of life *versus* death, acquittal against condemnation, is determined by the attitude of men towards the Son. In many passages this plenipotentary endowment of "the Son" with functions, powers, authorities, is expressed by this same word (*δίδωκε*), "he hath given" (ver. 36; ch. iii. 35; vi. 37, 39; x. 29; xvii. 2, 4). Meyer limits the meaning of *κρίνει* to "condemnation," and Stier includes in it the separation of sin from the life of believers; but surely the judgment of the world is effected by the light that shines upon it, and the essence of the judgment (*κρίσις*) is the discrimination which infallibly follows the revelation of the Father through the Son.

Ver. 23.—The purpose of the entire commission of judgment to the Son, a bestowment which illustrates the quickening results that he (who does the will of the Father) wills to effect, is now gathered to a lofty climax, abundantly vindicating the right he had claimed to call God his own Father. It is as follows, in order that all may honour the Son. *Τιμῶσιν*, not *προσκυνῶσιν* ("honour," not "worship"), is the word used; but seeing that the identical sentiment of reverence due to the Supreme Being, to the Father, is that which is here said to be due to the Son, and is here declared to be the reason why all judgment is entrusted to the issues of his will,—we are at a loss to know how loftier attributes could be ascribed to the Son. It is surprising that Weiss should declare it "impossible to find any statements here as to the metaphysical unity and equality of the Son and the Father, although current apologetics believe it has succeeded in doing so" ('Life of Christ,' vol. ii. 326, note). Luthardt asks, "What other form of *τιμῆ* than that which calls him 'Lord and God' shall belief now assume, than that which the Christian Church cherishes toward Jesus?" Thoma points to Eph. ii. 1—5; Col. ii. 11—13, and other great parallels in the New Testament. We gladly accept them, not as proof that the Johannist framed Christ's discourse from them, but as proof that the ideas of St. Paul were not originated by him, but came from the direct assertions of Christ, of which we have the historic trace.

Ver. 24.—In this verse the discourse turns from the relations between the Father and the Son, to deal with the relations of the living Christ (the "I," who is speaking throughout) with men. In vers. 21—23, indeed vers. 19—23, the Lord had been speaking prominently of the ideal sonship, of "the Son" on the Divine side of his

consciousness. The use of the first person, which is here resumed, calls more express attention to the consciousness of his human manifestation, which again reaches its climax in ver. 27. Verily, verily, I say unto you—I, whose voice you now hear, whom you are misunderstanding, rejecting, and seeking to slay. I say with most solemn emphasis—He that heareth my word—this term, *ἀκούειν*, suggests moral as well as physical hearing, and means whosoever allows my thought to penetrate his nature, hears and understands, hears and acts accordingly (cf. Matt. xi. 15; xiii. 9, 18; Rev. ii. 7, 17; iii. 22)—and further believeth him that sent me; believeth *i.e.* that he has borne and is continually bearing true witness concerning me. There is a different meaning conveyed by *πιστεύειν*, with the simple dative, and *πιστεύειν εἰς τινά*, or *ἐν τινί*, or *ἐπὶ τινά*, and again *ἐν τινί*; these prepositions convey a gradually deepening sense of intercommunion and dependence; the simple accusative is found in 1 Cor. ix. 17; Ellicott on 1 Tim. i. 16). To believe on a person, or in one, conveys a different idea from believing that person with regard to any special assertion he may make. Here the belief of God has emphatic reference to the testimony the Father is bearing to the claims of Jesus. Such a hearer, such a believer, hath eternal life; even here he has entered into the “eternal now;” on earth he is in possession of the blessed consummation. Such belief in words authenticated by the Father’s commission is eternal life (cf. ch. xvii. 3). It lifts a man out of the reach of corruption and condemnation, it ushers him into eternity, it is an eternal blessedness in itself; and he cometh not to judgment, but has passed from the death into the life. He is already translated from the death-state to the renewed, quickened state. The decision and discrimination between him and the world have taken place. The judgment is over, the books are closed, the condemnation is no longer possible. He will not perish, he has eternal life. “The believer is free from the judgment which executes itself in the exclusion inflicted on the unbeliever, by the revelation of Jesus as the Light, because he is already in possession of the saving blessing” (Luthardt). “Judgment, being completed, does not require repetition” (Godet). “When that confidence in Christ has illumined the heart wherein we recognize that we have been verily accepted, listened to, ruled, and defended by God, peace follows, and high joyfulness, which is the realization of eternal life, and which covers the sins that erewhile had clung to our weakness” (Melancthon). In this life of faith “we taste the powers of the world

to come,” “our citizenship is in heaven.” “This eternal life is a veritable resurrection of the dead” (Augustine).

Ver. 25.—Once more the solemn asseveration, Verily, verily, I say unto you, is repeated, when our Lord still further emphasized the authority of his own word, the Father’s confirmation of its accuracy, and the Divine signature and testimony to its power. The hour is coming, and now is. There will be more wonderful attestations to the truth than any which as yet have broken the silence of the grave. Not only will the physically dead rise from their bier or their grave in the fullness and strength of resumed life, but the spiritually dead in vast multitudes will pass from death into eternal life, will know that the bitterness of death is over, and that there shall be no more condemnation for them. The Holy Spirit was, when Jesus spake, about to convict the world of sin, and to unveil the glory of Christ to the eye of faith. Pentecost would confirm the word of Jesus, for the Spirit will bear witness to the reality of the risen Lord. But whereas that hour was only “coming,” that marvellous day had yet to dawn upon the world, Jesus added it *now is*—while I am speaking the reality of this vast spiritual change is taking place. There are proofs enough already. “Now,” already, at this very moment, the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. The spiritually dead shall be disturbed in their slumber and roused from their indifference, be made to know that the summons of supreme power and authority is addressed to them. Emphasis is laid upon the *Divine* force which is at work upon heart and conscience. “The Son of God,” not “a son of man” merely, is uttering his voice. And they that have heard—accepted the summons, “heard the word,” and believed, not merely him that sent me (the teaching of ver. 24), but that he who has been sent is none other than the “Son of God”—these, said Christ, shall live. The form of the expression *ἀκούσαντες* can only designate those who *give ear*, and by this the literal resurrection of all the dead is excluded.<sup>1</sup> The teaching of this verse reasserts the teaching of ver. 24, and adds to it, and clothes the truth in the imagery of the general resurrection. The awful suggestion is involved that many of these dead ones will hear the voice of the Son of God, and not give heed to it. Hengstenberg endeavours to overthrow this gene-

<sup>1</sup> “For this double meaning of *ἀκούειν* in one sentence, see Plato, ‘Legg,’ p. 712 B, *ἰδὲν . . . ἐπικαλέμεθα ὃ δὲ ἀκούσει τε καὶ ἀκούσας (cum exaudiverit) . . . ἔλθοι*; cf. also the proverbial expression, *Ἀκούοντα μὴ ἀκούειν* (Meyer).



ral interpretation of the verse, making it equivalent to vers. 27, 28 rather than an expansion of ver. 24. The "now is," according to him, covers the whole period to the second advent, and the future *ἀκούσονται* points to a future epoch in the *ῥα*. But the emphatic omission of the *νῦν ἔστι* in the later and more explicit statement is against such a view, and the *ἀκούσονται* is best explained by its adaptation to the whole clause. "The hour is coming" as well as "now is." The *ζήσονται*, "shall live," rather than shall be "made alive," is far more applicable to the resurrection of dead souls than of defunct bodies. It is equivalent to "have eternal life" of the previous verses.

Ver. 26.—This verse, introduced by *γὰρ*, shows that the statement about to follow will sustain some portion of the previous one. Which portion? As it seems to me, the coming clause justifies the alteration of the term "the Son" into "the Son of God;" and declares, more fully than any other passage in the New Testament, the lofty and unique character of the Sonship which he claimed. For even as the Father hath life in himself—the sublime assumption of the self-existence and eternal being of the Father, the absolute Possessor of life *per se*, the Source ultimate and efficient of all that is connoted by life, the eternal Fountain of life—in like manner also he gave to the Son to have life in himself. "He generated," as Augustine has it, "such a Son who should have life in himself, not as a participator in life, but one who should be as he himself is—Life itself." It is the *bonâ fide* expression of community of nature, attribute, quality, and possession of Godhead. In virtue of this utterance, the evangelist, learning from the consciousness of Christ through long years of meditation, under the power of the Spirit, eventually formulated the doctrine of the prologue, "In him was life." "The Son," or the *God-Man*, is, so far as this Sonship is concerned, the veritable Son of God with such a fulness of life-power and such a fountain of life flowing from him, that his voice is the voice of the Eternal Son. This is the primary meaning, though since the Lord returned to His use of the word "the Son," and since the word "gave" is also employed to denote the stupendous conception, there is also involved in it the declaration that the *God-Man*, seeing he is both Son of God and Son of man, is endowed with all the functions of both. In his incarnation he has not lost the infinite fulness of life-giving power. "He quickeneth whom he will," having life in himself. His voice is the voice of the Son of God. The glory of the Word who became flesh was the glory of the Only Begotten. The part which this great passage took in

the Arian controversy is well known (see Athanasius, 'Discourses against Arians,' iii. 3, translated by J. H. Newman). Archdeacon Walkins emphasizes the position that the Lord here speaks of "life in himself," which was given to the Son (God-Man) in virtue of, and as the reward of his sacrificial work. He points to Phil. ii. 6, etc. But Jesus here speaks of a gift already made.

Vers. 27—29.—(ii.) Second "greater work"—judgment of the world.

Ver. 27.—And he gave him (i.e. the Son, the *God-Man*) authority to execute judgment,<sup>1</sup> because he is Son of man. He has vindicated his power to confer life upon the dead by asserting the possession by "the Son" of the Divine Sonship. He now adds, so far as the relation to man is concerned, his fitness and authority to administer justice, to preside over the entire juridical process, to lift the scales, to determine the destiny of the human race. The fitness is seen in this, that he, "the Son," is "the Son of man." The one term, "THE SON," entirely covers the twofold Sonship. The proof of his humanity is assumed to be complete. The fact of it is the ground that he who knows what is in man should be the Judge of men. By personal experience of man's temptations and frailties; by knowing every palliation of our sins, every extenuation of our failures, every aggravation of our weakness; by gazing through human eyes with human consciousness upon our mysterious destiny, he is competent to judge; whereas by being Son of God as well as Son of man, he is entrusted with power to execute the judgment of the Eternal. The principle involved is based upon perfect justice. The honour thus conferred on the *God-Man* is infinite, the consolation thus held out to man unspeakable. We are being judged by Christ, not by impersonal law. The entire incidence upon every individual of the Law is in the hands of the Redeemer. The Saviour, the Life-giver, the Voice which quickens the dead, assigns the judgment. We must be careful, in any inference we draw from this grand utterance, to avoid all suspicion of schism or rivalry between the Father and the Son. The Son is not more merciful than the Father. For the Father

<sup>1</sup> The *καὶ* before *κρίσιν* is omitted by R.T. and Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Alford, on the authority of N<sup>o</sup>, A, B, L, Italic, Curetonian Syriac, Coptic. The absence of the article before *νῆς* makes this phrase more indefinite than the numerous places where it occurs with the article. 'Ο *νῆς ἀνθρώπου* in many places undoubtedly means the ideal man, who by his humiliation is clothed with spiritual glory. But the phrase, *νῆς ἀνθρώπου*, emphasizes the humanity in antithesis to Divinity.

of the Old Testament pitieth his children, and knoweth their frame (Ps. ciii. 13, 14), and the Father of Jesus Christ loves the world, and counts the very hairs of our heads. The Son will not exercise this judgment with less regard to the claims of eternal justice than the Father; but his knowledge of humanity is, by the nature of the case, a guarantee of such application of the justice of God to the case of every individual, that man's knowledge of himself will be able personally to justify and verify it. The Divine judgment will go forth from the heart of man himself.

Vers. 28, 29.—It is impossible not to draw a distinction between the theme of these verses and that of vers. 24, 25. The Lord announces an event which is in the future altogether. The “and now is,” which characterized the first resurrection of which he spoke, is here omitted. The description of the subjects of the resurrection as those “in their graves,” contradistinguishes them from “the dead” of ver. 25—a phrase which will suffer several interpretations. The universality of the summons, and the impossibility of neglecting it or ignoring it, form another marked contrast to the resurrection already referred to. *Marvel not at this!* At what? Clearly at the entire statement that the resurrection of dead souls will be the undoubted issue of accepting Christ's word and identifying it with the word of God. *Marvel not* that the judgment of the world is entrusted to “the Son,” because he is both Son of man as well as Son of God. “*Marvel not*” is a relative word. It means obviously that there is a greater marvel still in store. *Because the hour is coming*; always coming, though it seemeth long—coming swiftly, measured on the great clock-face of the universe. Geological time, astronomical æons, should before this have rebuked our impertinence about the delays of God, and our shallow criticism of the fulness of the times. “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” As compared with geological annals, still less with God's eternities, it is only the day before yesterday when Adam fell; it is only yesterday that Jesus died and rose again, and to-morrow that he will come in his glory. The hour is coming when all who are in the graves shall hear his voice. The same voice that wakes the spiritually dead shall pierce the clods, shall find the buried dead, shall bring once more into the world of the visible and tangible the long-forgotten lives. Every solitary life lives with him and before him. The organic clothing of the spirit, which goes on, as St. Paul suggests (2 Cor. v. 1) from the death of the physical body till the coming of the Son of God with glory, does not render this statement more

difficult, but more comprehensible. As far as this world is concerned, those who are clothed upon with the house not made with hands—those who are with Christ, are to all appearance dead, and in their “graves,” in their memorial-places; but they will all hear the voice of the Son, and they will come forth; they that have done<sup>1</sup> good things, to the resurrection of life; they that have practised evil things, to the resurrection of judgment. They will come forth from these hiding-places of fading memories. Even tombs of prophets and kings are themselves buried, covered by the graves of the many generations that have followed. The grave-hidden will come forth into what we call the reality, visibility, tangibility, of things. The hour is coming on apace when Death himself shall be dead, and the mystery of time be finished. They that rise will divide themselves into two classes. The anastasis will have two forms. There is a “resurrection of life” and a “resurrection of judgment.” Those who have indeed passed from spiritual death to life will not come into “judgment” (not κρίμα or κατάκριμα, but κρίσις) when their anastasis is complete, their judgment is over, their life is secure. When those who have not heard the voice of the Son of God, have not come to the light, who are not of God nor of the truth—men who have deliberately practised “evil things” without compunction or amendment,—when these are called from their tombs, from their shadowy hiding-places, into the presence of him who executes judgment, it will be to undergo the (κρίσις) judgment (2 Cor. v. 10). We must, indeed, all be made manifest before the judgment-throne of Christ, to receive the consequences of “the doing of well” and “the practice of evil.” The issue of the one is life, and of the other is judgment. The suggestion seems to be that such judgment may issue unfavourably, but the thought is centred upon the process of the judgment. The effort of Reuss and others to draw a marked distinction between the eschatology of the synoptists and of John fails. Christ does not represent the spiritual resurrection as “greater work” than the physical resurrection. On the contrary, while he speaks of the *marvelling* of his hearers at his claim to quicken the spiritually dead, yet the ground of their

<sup>1</sup> Ποιῆν and πράσσειν are compared with each other in ch. iii. 20, 21 (see notes). The two places where these words are used, are mutually explanatory. Those that have done good and come to the light, will at the last pass into resurrection-life—those who have practised evil things and dreaded and turned away from Divine illumination, will rise to judgment of condemnation.

marvel is emphatically arrested (see ver. 28) until they should recognize to the full the fact that, as Son of God and Son of man, he would call all the dead from their graves. Thoma finds admirable justification for this representation by the Johannist of the Messianic Judge, alike in the Book of Daniel, in the synoptic Gospels, in the Pauline Epistles, and Apocalypse!

Vers. 30—40.—(c) *The witness borne to these claims.*

Ver. 30.—The Lord, still preserving the consciousness of his own *ego*, continues to speak through human lips to human ears. He deprecates the criticism, "Who and what canst thou be, that thou shouldst execute judgment, or bring us to thy bar, or compel us to come from our hidden places to thy judgment-seat?" It is not as mere man that he will judge the world; God will judge through him. Moreover, the equality of "life" and "honour" and "authority" that he has with the Father, as the veritable Son of God, is nevertheless a life derived, a being generated, an honour *given*. He here opens up on this basis a new class of instruction, and proceeds to explain the threefold nature of the testimony borne to his present claim to be the Representative and co-Agent of the Father. He goes back in these words to the great text of the discourse, viz. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (ver. 19). I (the *ἐγώ* is very emphatic, the individual standing before them associates himself, and is identified, with the one Being who, as Son of God and Son of man, has done, is doing, and will yet do, wonderful things)—I can of mine own self, from any separate or self-originating source in myself, apart from the Father, do nothing. He subsequently said to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." He claims a higher source than himself for all his own power (*δύναμις*). When referring to the same subject (vers. 19, 20), he drew his illustration from the sense of sight. The Father "shows" to him, and he "sees" all things that the Father doeth. Here he adds, with special reference to the last and consummating manifestation of relation with the Father, As I hear, I judge: and my judgment of men is righteous; because I seek not my own will, but the will of him<sup>1</sup> who sent me. Christ refers to his judgments of absolution or condemnation upon things or men, posi-

tively declaring them to be either right or wrong; e.g. he claimed the power to say, "Thy sins be forgiven;" "Thy faith hath saved thee;" "It is better for this man that he had never been born;" "Come unto me;" "Depart from me;" "I never knew you." These and all his other judgments on scribes and Pharisees, on devils and hypocrites, on Pilate and Herod, on Jerusalem and the world, are revelations of the Father's mind—are in themselves just judgments, absolutely free from any selfhood, from any reflex influence or reaction from men to himself. They are the true and infallible expression of the Divine will. Because of the entire conformity of his will and himself to the Divine will, the judgment must correspond to that which is, in its very nature, right and true. If this be so, we can scarcely refrain from asking, "Wherein, then, lies the consolation and encouragement derivable from the fact that the execution of judgment is placed for man's sake in the hands of the Son of man?" It lies here, that the Incarnation is perfect; that the manhood has not obliterated the Divinity, nor the Godhead absorbed the manhood, of the Christ. The human consciousness of the Son becomes the basis for the Father's judgment, which is uttered thus absolutely and finally through human lips. It is impossible to imagine thoughts like these arising in the mind of some thinker of the second century. Great as the prologue to this Gospel unquestionably is, this unveiling of the heart of the Son of God incarnate is immeasurably greater. The consciousness of Christ is unique. Neither legend nor imagination, to say nothing of history, has ever transcended it. Here, too, the enormous difference between the Johannine Christ and the Philonic Logos comes into startling prominence.

Ver. 31.—At this point the Lord proceeds to meet the clamour which most probably arose, the doubt and questioning which broke the silence with which his solemn defence had been received. We can hear between the lines the cries of an excited crowd, declaring that these words are simply his own. Such testimony as this to himself must be sustained and sanctioned. Why and how can this Teacher take such ground as to assert about himself what no prophet, no rabbi, no chief priest of the people, not even the greatest man of men, Moses himself, had ever dared to claim? Christ admits that such assumptions as these need justification and approval over and above his *ipse dixit*. The words that follow are startling: If I bear witness concerning myself, my witness is not true. At first sight this is in direct contradiction to ch. viii. 14, where, in reply to the Pharisees' "Thou

<sup>1</sup> The *πατέρος* of T.R. rests on E, G, H, M, S, U, V, and numerous cursives; but rejected by the Revised Version, Meyer, McClellan, Godet, as well as Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, Alford, Tregelles, with  $\aleph$ , A, B, D, K, L,  $\Delta$ , twelve cursives, with several Italic manuscripts, Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, and Fathers.

bearest witness concerning thyself; thy witness is not true," he replied, "*Though I bear witness of myself, my witness is true*; because I know whence I came, and whither I go." The absolute unison with the Father, which he was not only conscious of, but had also revealed to the Pharisees, lifted his own word to the grandeur of a word of God. The Divine beamed through the human, the infinite through the finite. Here he says, "*If I bear—if I and I alone were bearing witness to myself*," then—supposing a case which, as a matter of fact, is impossible—"my witness is not true." If he were acting alone, which is an inconceivable supposition, seeing that in the depths of his consciousness he knew that he was one with the Father, then for his human nature to break away thus from the Father and disdain his testimony would nullify and falsify his witness. He is not bearing witness alone.

Vers. 32, 37, 38.—(a) *The witness of the Father.*

Ver. 32.—It is another that witnesseth concerning me; and <sup>1</sup> I know that the witness which he witnesseth concerning me is true. It is a mistake, with Ewald, De Wette, and many others, to suppose that this refers to the testimony of John the Baptist. By Augustine, Hengstenberg, Luthardt, Godet, Meyer, etc., it has been perceived that the "other" (ἄλλος) refers to the Father. Jesus expressly declines to receive John's testimony as his justification or sufficient vindication, and he contrasts it with the higher confirmation which in three distinct ways is already and continuously vouchsafed to him. The present tense, μαρτυρεῖ, is in striking contrast to the testimony of John already silenced by imprisonment or death. The methods of this testimony are subsequently analyzed and described. The Father's witness includes—

Vers. 33—35.—(β) *The temporary witness of John.*

Ver. 33.—Ye have sent to John, and he hath borne witness to the truth. The sending to John was probably a reference to the official transaction described in ch. i. 19. This is not the "other" whom he referred to, for in the next clause he made solemn disclaimer of resting his claim upon John or upon any individual man. The witness of the forerunner was a true one. The function of the prophet is to bear witness to the Light, to strip off the veils which hide it, to call attention to its most solemn realities, to quicken vision, to stimulate conscience, to

disturb apathy, to discern the coming and prepare the way of the Lord (see ch. i. 4, 5, notes). He was not the Light; but he did call attention to a testimony immeasurably more precious than any word proceeding merely from human lips. The testimonies of John, both before and after he came into contact with Christ, were very wonderful and were adapted to exert and did produce a deep impression upon the people for a time; but by themselves they would not have given sufficient ratification to the Lord's words. We may welcome still all Johannine, ministerial testimonies to the Lord, but the power of God himself must assert itself to the inner consciousness before any man receives the gospel. No mere human testimony to such claims as these rises to the dignity of the occasion. Unless the Father's witness can be discerned, supreme, convincing, and final, John's witness would be insufficient. It may arrest attention, it may impress the apathetic, it may overawe the gainsayers; but it is not final, nor does it leave the hearers without excuse. All the rhetoric, all the threatening, all the irony, of Elijah would have failed if the fire of the Lord had not fallen to consume the sacrifice.

Ver. 34.—But I for my part receive not the witness which affirms my Sonship from a man; or, yet the witness which I receive is not from man. Some have given the stronger meaning of "take hold," or "snatch," or "strive after," to λαμβάνω. But this is unnecessary, for emphasis is laid on the article, "the witness," which is real, infallible, convincing, commanding, must come from the highest source of all. Yet, though Christ cannot depend upon John's testimony, it ought to have had weight with his hearers. It called them to repentance, to holy living, to faith in the Coming One. It discounted their pride in Abrahamic birth, and their false notions of race-purity; it made personal and individual that which had been looked at as a national monopoly of privilege. Nay, more, it had testified that he was the "Lamb of God" and the "Son of God" and the "Bridegroom of the Church." Therefore he continued: Howbeit, these things I say—I call attention to the sum total of his message, the testimony he bore to truth—that ye may be saved; for all that John said was true. "John did no miracle: but all things that he said concerning Jesus were true" (ch. x. 41; see notes). If the Jews had accepted the testimony of John, they would not now be cherishing angry and rebellious thought, and have been so blinded to the truth and reality of things.

Ver. 35.—He was the lamp (λύχνος, not φῶς) that burneth and shineth. He was not the Light, but came to bear witness to

<sup>1</sup> The reading οἵδμεν (or οἵδαμεν in some Fathers), N\*, D, has induced Tischendorf (8th edit.) to insert in the text. He is not followed by any other editor.

the Light (ch. i. 8). The glory of his appearance was a derived or kindled illumination (cf. Matt. vi. 22; 2 Pet. i. 19). (It is not against this inference that in Rev. xxi. 23 the Lamb is the Lamp of the New Jerusalem.) The household lamp or torch, when kindled, burns with more or less brilliance, but burns itself out, exhausts itself. One may walk in the light of it, see the way one should take, discharge duties that would otherwise be impossible, avoid perils that might without the lamp prove disastrous or destructive; but the capacity of the torch is soon reduced to a minimum. Bengel, Stier, Alford, think that the celebrated passage in Ecclus. xlviii. 1 may be referred to: "Then stood up Elijah the prophet like as a fire, and his word burned as a lamp." This is not impossible, though it would stand alone as a distinct reference in the Gospels to any apocryphal book. Lange has given a long series of the lamp and fire symbols of the Old Testament; the group of events in which the Lord appeared in flames of fire and clouds of glory, from Exod. iii. to Mal. iii. 2, affirming John to be "the flame-signal of Messiah, the last Old Testament form of the pillar of fire and candlestick of the temple, therefore the lamp at once flaming and shining." More than this, and more to the point, we find that, under the figure of lamps of fire, the messengers of God, the activities of the Church, were repeatedly set forth (cf. Matt. v. 14-16; xxv. 1-8; Rev. i. 20; Phil. ii. 15). John was the *burning lamp*, not the archetypal Light. Ye desired for a season to rejoice in his light. Many interpretations have been suggested, such as the exultation of a wedding-party in the brief light of the torch-bearer, announcing the approach of the bridegroom; or the dancing of ephemerides in the glitter of a lamp. The metaphor is lost in the solemn memory of the high gratification for a season which the populations of Judæa, Galilee, and the wilderness had manifested on the apparition of the great prophet. The universal acclaim soon subsided. The leaders of the people fell back when they heard John's call to repentance. Publicans and harlots pressed into the kingdom before the scribes and Pharisees. "The generation of vipers" did to John "whatsoever they listed." The secular power hushed his voice and crushed the man. "For a season" only did they listen to his word or respond to his challenge. His great testimony, though given to him by God, and by no means proceeding from his mere human consciousness, had been in the main unheeded. Wünsche quotes from 'Sofa,' fol. 21, a, "Rabbi Menahem said that Solomon (Prov. vi. 23) compares 'prayer' with 'lamp,' and 'teaching' with 'light,'

because the one flashes for the twinkling of an eye, comforts in the moment during which it shines; while the other, like the shining of the sun, burns evermore, and leads to eternal rest."

Ver. 36.—(γ) *The witness of the works.* But the witness which I have is greater<sup>1</sup> than [that] of John. The testimony of John was memorable and noteworthy in many respects. If the people had accepted it, they would have admitted the Divine authority of One who was "mightier" than John. The synoptic Gospels show that Jesus made a similar appeal to the conscience of his critics on a later occasion (Matt. xxi. 25, and parallels). Though John's baptism was "from heaven," and though John's testimony was "great," yet that which accompanied the ministry of Jesus was "greater" still. The words of John were not merely John's words, or they would have been valueless. Moreover, "the testimony that I have" is in itself convincing; it has a Divine, self-evidencing force, which, added to my word, confirms and establishes my claim. The proof or illustration of this is as follows: For the works which the Father hath given me that I should bring them to completion, the very works, which I am doing, bear witness concerning me, that the Father hath sent me. The works of Christ are his normal activities—the deeds which express the nature and compass of his will, and indicate the qualities of his Person. They would be *τέρατα* and *σημεία*, should any other perform such things or live on such a platform of exalted activity. They are his "works." This term is often used for the special manifestations of his alliance with the supernatural, Divine realm (ch. vii. 3; ix. 3; x. 25, 32, etc.; xiv. 10; xv. 24). They are in their fulness and summation the *ἔργον* of the Lord (ch. iv. 34; xvii. 4). They are, moreover, "given" to him to "do" or to "finish." This idea is frequently expressed. "All things are given into his hand" (ch. iii. 35), all judgment is given him to execute (ch. v. 22, 27). The Father hath given him self-existence (ver. 26; cf. ch. xvii. 2, 6, 9, 12, 24; xviii. 9). It is impossible to dissociate these "works" from those great miracles which ought to command assent to his claims, even if, alas! his bare words are not sufficiently convincing. John's Gospel makes numerous references to these proofs of the Divine commission, these illustrations as well as evidences of his right to speak. But the "works" are

<sup>1</sup> Alford, Lachmann, and Tregelles read here *μεῖζον*, with A, B, E, G, etc. *Μεῖζον* is the reading of N, H, K, L, S, U, etc., and is preferred by Tischendorf (8th edit.), R. T., Westcott and Hort

not limited to the miraculous healings, to multiplication of bread and wine, and resurrection from the dead. The whole of his work, from his baptism and temptation to his own resurrection from the dead, was his *ἔργον*. This was made up of all the self-revelation of his life, of all his consecration and sympathy, of all his character, of all the resuscitation of dead souls, of all the joy he was pouring into broken hearts, and all the life he was evoking in moribund humanity. "These works that I am doing bear witness concerning me, that the Father hath sent me." They are of such a character that he confidently declares about them that they proclaim his Divine commission. The entire work, reaching special expression in certain typical acts and deeds, was greater than the verbal testimony which John bore to his mission. All that John said was true, but Christ's "works" prove it.

Vers. 37, 38.—*The witness of the Father further elucidated.* (See ver. 32.)

Ver. 37.—And the Father (himself<sup>1</sup>), who sent me, (he) hath borne witness concerning me. If the "himself" be the genuine reading (and it is defended by Godet, McClellan, and Meyer), there would seem to be a special or direct and additional form of the Father's testimony. And several ancient and modern critics (Chrysostom, Bengel, Paulus, Godet) have seen in it a reference to the special "voice and shape" which were heard and seen by John and Jesus at the baptism, when heaven was opened, when a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the well-beloved and only begotten Son of God, and when the Spirit of God descended as a dove and abode upon him. This testimony was only given to the world through the consciousness and word of John, who, after receiving it, bore record that this was the Son of God. Meyer and many others, rather following the suggestion of De Wette that the inward drawing of the Father to the Son was that to which the Lord referred, would thus complete the testimony of the "works." This testimony, then, which is cited against the challenge, "Thou bearest witness concerning thyself," would be a purely subjective one. Westcott thinks it refers to the whole of the Old Testament ministry and prophetic and typical anticipation of the Christ, culminating in John the Baptist. This particular series of testimonies is referred to in vers. 39 and 47, etc. Moulton, who rejects the *αὐτός*, sees no new, no direct,

testimony in addition to that of the works, but the assertion that they are the voice of the Father—in a sense the very form of the Father, for the conviction of those who might if they would come to him. If the *αὐτός* must be retained, I think that we must suppose our Lord referring to the whole of those objective manifestations of the Father's will and mind concerning Christ which were outside of his own act or work; and all that shining through his face, that whispering through his word of what was the eternal Father's face and voice, and plainly distinguished from the work of the Son; e.g. the angels' song, the miraculous providence which protected his childhood, the opening of heaven at his baptism, the Divinity which attended him and which made his ministry so strange and strong an influence. Nor could he who had the whole of his life before him fail to be conscious of further testimonies from heaven and from Providence which, though unrecorded, would continue to set their seal upon his character and work. We must never forget that our Lord himself was a revelation of the Son. But the revelation of the Son in his *ἔργα* was accompanied throughout with another manifestation—that of the Father. The glory of the Lord shone round about him. Nevertheless, a difficulty is conceded as arising out of the unsusceptibility and limited opportunities of his hearers. Never have ye heard a voice of him, or seen a form of him. These voices and these sounds need opened ears and unscaled eyes. You (says Christ) have not heard that which you might have heard. You have not seen that which you might have seen. On a subsequent occasion he said to one of his disciples, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou; then, Show us the Father?" So that there was, indeed, the condition of adequate revelation of the Father provided for the disciples in the life of Christ, in the ministry of the Son of the Father. Moreover, it far exceeded the vision of God which was granted to patriarchs and prophets under the Old Testament dispensation. Doubtless the voice of Jehovah had been heard (Exod. xx. 19; Deut. iv. 12), the face of Jehovah had been seen (Gen. xxxii. 30; Exod. xxiv. 10; Numb. xii. 8; Deut. v. 4, 24). Isaiah saw the glory of the Angel of the Lord (vi.; cf. ch. xii. 41), and Ezekiel likewise by the river of Chebar (iii. 23). Nevertheless, the evangelist, on the credit of the great utterance before us, has laid down, as the very climax of the prologue, "No man hath seen God at any time (*πάποτε*); the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared

<sup>1</sup> The *αὐτός* is omitted, and *ἐκεῖνος* substituted for it, by Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T., Westcott and Hort, and Tregelles, on the authority of N, B, L (L is generally a satellite of N, B), while all other uncials, cursives, and numerous Fathers preserve the *αὐτός*.

him." This language of the *prologue* shows that the true revelation of the Father's heart was not even granted to the noblest of the seers and patriarchs. Such manifestations as the visions of the Old Testament saints were not the veritable voice or form of the Father. Should mankind ever obtain vision or audition of the Father, it must be through the presence among them of him who had been for ever in the bosom of the Father. Though these captious critics were in a position to have received this revelation of the Highest, they had not done so. "Ye have neither heard a voice of him, nor seen a form of him. You might have seen and heard and handled if you had chosen, but you will not come to me, you will not believe me, you will not yield to my claims as One sent to you from the Father!"

Ver. 38.—And further, you have not his Word (ΤΟΝ ΛΟΓΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ) abiding in you. The Word of the Father (for the *αὐτοῦ* refers to the Father), i.e. the full expression of the Father's heart, was sounding through the voice of the Son of God, and might have entered into and become an abiding power in their inmost conscience and their spiritual life; but they had not received the "Word" of the Lord through the "Voice" of the Lord. The reason given is, Because him whom he (the Father) sent, him (this One) ye believe not. In other words, "Your lack of faith in me accounts for your perverse misconception, for your inability to see and hear all that there is of the Father's personal testimony to me." Some suspect a *petitio principii* in this argument, but the reasoning seems to be this; there is abundant evidence, corroboration, and co-operative glory, affirming the truth of all that Christ has said about himself as the Source of life and Judge of man; but the moral susceptibility of his hearers is paralyzed, and their faith in the most fundamental facts of their own experience is at fault. They seem impervious, not only to Christ's Word, but to the corroborative testimonies themselves.

Vers. 39, 40.—(5) *The witness of the Scriptures.*

Ver. 39.—Ye search the Scriptures. A large number of commentators, from Chrysostom and Augustine to Luther, Tholuck, Hengstenberg, McClellan, Luthardt, and Ewald, with the Authorized Version, regard this as an imperative command. This is grammatical, and corresponds to the language of Isa. xxxiv. 16; but with Cyril, Bengel, De Wette, Meyer, Godet, Lange, Westcott, Plummer, Watkins, we think the whole context demands the indicative. The second clause, "because in them," etc., follows far more obviously upon an assertion than upon a precept. The "ye will not" that follows is far more in harmony with the indicative

than with the supposed command. The Lord says, "You have a third great testimony to my claim, and yet you are not prepared to accept it." *Ye search the Scriptures.* The verb *ἐπεύρα* is used (ch. vii. 52; 1 Pet. i. 11; Rom. viii. 27; 1 Cor. ii. 10) for minute, prolonged search. The kind of investigation which the rabbis spent upon the text and letter of the Holy Scriptures is a proverb, and led to the allegorical mystical meanings of the Gemaras and other Hebrew literature. "Ye search the Scriptures" rather than the living Word, rather than the Divine meaning and message from the living God which they do contain. This is one term out of many which the Lord employed for the sacred literature which was the great heritage of the Hebrew people. Elsewhere he called it "the Law," "the Law and prophets," "Moses and the prophets," "your Law," "the wisdom of God." He admits their study, prolonged and eager, of the sacred writings, and he justifies the ground and motive of such search, viz.: because ye think in them ye have eternal life; or, ye shall have, or shall find, eternal life. Some powerful critics, like Meyer, urge that our Lord agrees so far with the Jews, that he sympathizes with their search, and that censure or ironical language would be inconsistent with the Saviour's reverence for the Scriptures. But the expression is very unusual on that hypothesis, "Ye think [or, 'imagine'] ye have in them," rather than "ye have through them." Surely our Lord is here condemning the superstitious idea that, in the mere possession of the letter, they were possessors of the eternal life; that, apart from the indwelling Word, apart from the heart of the message itself, some magical advantage was springing. Hillel, whose view of Scripture may be expressed in a saying ('Aboth,' ii. 8), "He who has gotten to himself words of the Law hath gotten to himself the life of the world to come," here differs utterly from the Lord, who, on the doctrine of Holy Scripture, takes ground similar to that which he had taken with reference to the temple and the sabbath. It is not the bare possession of the Scriptures, nor the prolonged examination of its mere letter, that is the condition of eternal life. "Search" which is originated and stimulated by a vague idea of the life-giving force of the letter, is illusive. We may think that in them we have eternal life, but our Lord would undeceive us. Moreover, from the depths of his own consciousness and knowledge of his own mission, he adds: And they are they which testify concerning me. This is one of the key-notes of New Testament teaching, viz. Christ's idea of the Old Testament, that it

was a sketch or portraiture drawn in successive ages and on various material of himself—that it was an outline of great principles which he was about, *not* to rub out, but to fill in, not “to destroy, but to fulfil.” The histories, the experiences, the ceremonial, the dynasties, the offices, the songs and prayers, the predictive and typical sorrows there depicted, were all prelibations and unconscious prophecies of himself. “They testify concerning me,” and, together with my works and with my forerunner, and, more than all, with my Father’s own voice speaking and my Father’s own face shining through all, they complete the manifold testimony to the fact that I have come to do his will, to work with him, to deliver, to restore, to give life, and to execute judgment also, when my hour is come. If this be so, then strange, inconsistent, and tragic is the ultimate issue—

Ver. 40.—And ye will not come to me, that ye may have life. This fearful conclusion of the whole matter is charged upon the responsibility of man. Doubtless, elsewhere, the will is described as itself made willing by the Divine attraction, by the grace of the Father. “He that hath seen and heard of the Father [seen, i.e. his shape and heard his voice—seen his shape and heard his voice in my ministry and manifestation], cometh unto me.” Yet the grace of God working directly on character or indirectly by other revelations, never obliterates the sense of responsibility. The appeal of God is made to the will of man, whether we consciously or unconsciously are made “willing in the day of his power” (cf. ch. vii. 17; vi. 44, 67; viii. 44). The sad tone of this solemn charge corresponds with and does much to explain the pathetic cry, “O Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children . . . and ye would not!” while the entire passage suggests that this appeal was only one specimen out of many such discourses, one hint of the numerous sayings and self-manifestations, one of many accumulated proofs of his Divine commission, out of which the belief of the evangelists and the invincible assent of the Church arose, that he was indeed “the Word made flesh,” “the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Vers. 41—47.—(d) *The effect of the revelation of the Son upon the Jews.*

Vers. 41, 42.—This appeal to the will of man was apparently entirely misunderstood, and ended for the time in failure. “They would not come.” Everything was prepared, but none were ready or willing to accept even so rich a blessing as life itself. This is the refrain of the whole Bible: “Ye will not;” “Ye would not;” “What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I

have not done in it?” “I called, and ye refused;” “I wrote the great things of my Law; ye have counted them as strange things.” Our Lord proceeds in the closing words to account in some respects for this unwillingness. I receive not glory from men, but I know you (*ἐγνωνκα*, I have come by experience or intuition to such knowledge of you), that you have not the love of God in you. The love of God is the principle of all obedience; and Christ elsewhere declares it to be the first and great commandment of the Law. But love is the principle of all knowledge. “He that loveth not knoweth not.” This principle reaches its fullest expression when we learn the greater truth that “God is love.” It is true of all objects of love, the highest kind of knowledge is not possible without love. This is pre-eminently the case when we think of knowing God. Since God is essential Love, without experiencing love we cannot realize that Divine essence. Again, there is an elementary faith that precedes elementary love, but when love is once awakened, faith again deepens, and love grows by what it feeds upon, until the faith becomes vision and the love rapture. But why the opening words, *I receive not glory from men*? Probably they intimate opposition and questioning to some such effect as this: “Thou hast declared thyself the Giver of life and resurrection, and charged our lack of spiritual life upon our unwillingness to believe these claims and to submit ourselves to these exalted assumptions or to go to thee for life. Thou art eager, after all, for our approval and glory.” To this Christ replied, “*Glory from men I receive not*. It is not for my sake, but for yours, I say, ‘Come unto me and live;’ but, alas! having searched you through and through, I discern no love, none of the spirit out of which the forces of faith can be evolved. The reason why you are unwilling to come to me for life is that you are measuring me by yourselves, and have not that self-emptying and abnegation and distrust out of which faith and love, love and faith, must ever spring.”

Ver. 43.—I have come in the name (i.e. in the power, with the credentials, with the encompassing revelation) of my Father, and ye receive me not. Your idea of the Father’s glory is so profoundly different from the reality, that you do not recognize it when it is offered you and shining over you. Christ did not profess to have come in his own name. He was not a mere evolution of humanity, or of Israel, or of the house of David. He was the Only Begotten of the Father, born from above, sent down from heaven. The language of the world was, “This is not Divine;” “It is too gentle, too gracious, too sympathetic for



God!" The religious world listened eagerly for some echo of the trumpet-peals of Sinai. It desired a king greater than Solomon, a prophet more terrible than Elijah. When he came with the real glory-robes of the love of God, and with the majesty of the Name of the Lord, there was widespread disappointment and cruel rejection of his commission. Should another come in his own (proper, peculiar) name, that is, with no testimony from heaven, seeking "honour (*δόξα*, glory) from men," creating a sovereignty by enlisting the voices of men, compromising with evil, making no warfare against the power of the world, allowing the legitimacy of the throne of the prince of this world;—should he come in his own name, alas! him (that one) ye will receive. The eagerness on the part of the Jews to find the Messiah has led them to accept in some sort no fewer than sixty-four false Christs (Schmidt, 'Jüdische Merkwürdigkeit,' vi. 27—30; Bengel and Meyer). Nor must the Christian Church take the flattering unctious that it is free from this charge. The teacher that can utilize to the widest extent the fashionable worldliness, and can mingle the pungent human condiment with the princely food of the King's banqueting-house, is he who at the present hour meets with the loudest response and the readiest reception. There is solemn warning here for statesman and author, artist and preacher.

Ver. 44.—How can ye believe, seeing that ye receive glory one from another, and ye seek not the glory that cometh from the only God? The difficulties of faith in himself multiply as he proceeds. First, he insisted that he had searched their hearts, and found there none of that elementary "love of God" which is the prime condition of knowledge or faith. Then he showed that an appreciation on their part of the type of character antithetic to his own, *i.e.* of the man who comes in his own name and seeks his glory from men, must blind them to that which is most characteristic of himself. They will receive the prophet, the pseudo-Christ, for the very reason that makes his own mission so unpalatable. He strikes right across their taste, their passion, their prejudice. He now lays down a new or modified statement of one of the prime conditions of spiritual faith. There is a universal desire for *δόξα*, glory, of some sort. The original meaning of *δόξα* here almost forces itself into the text. *Δόξα* is "opinion," thought, and the good opinion which one person may entertain with reference to another. The glory of a Greek citizen was the good opinion of his fellow-citizens or fellow-countrymen. God's "glory" is the universal judgment of all intelligences, including his own concerning himself. The highest "glory" of man is the approval of

Almighty God; the "opinion" which is absolutely true and is not mingled or contaminated with any flattering fictions. The minds which deliberately ignore this highest and only true source of glory, and substitute for it the glory of the ignorant plaudits and unreal approval, and unhesitating homage of the clique to which they belong, are in a moral condition incapacitating them to believe in the Christ. How should they? How can they? It is not possible for that man to believe Christ at all whose mind is so befogged, whose moral judgments are so dislocated. "The only God (*παρὰ τοῦ μόνου Θεοῦ*)" (see ch. xvii. 3; Rom. xvi. 26; 1 Tim. vi. 15). The use of this epithet in the Fourth Gospel is of singular value. Moreover, in this very connection the Son is so exalted above the world, and the Father comes so close to man in Christ, that we cannot wonder that Gnosticism and Arianism rapidly evolved a Ditheism of great peril to the conscience. The Lord, notwithstanding the lifting of his humanity to the throne of universal judgment, and the lifting of his Sonship into the bosom of God, on more than one occasion reminds his hearers of the unity, the solity, of Almighty God.

Ver. 45.—Think not, he added, with one concluding and sweeping exposition of their relation to the old covenant and to himself—Think not, as ye might be disposed to do, that I will accuse you to (*before*; see Syriac *k'dom*) the Father (not referring to the judgment-day, where he will appear as Judge, but now), as One in intimate and awful relation with the Father, or as One whose words have set up a standard which is much loftier or severer than that which you are prepared to allow. He has charged them already with having missed the deepest teaching of their own Scriptures, with fastening on the letter rather than on the spirit of the Divine Word; that, though the prime article of their creed was the doctrine of "the only God," they had no love of God, no appreciation of God as the only Source of worthy glory, and therefore neither faith nor knowledge. They were snapping up worthless pretenders, and drinking the flattery of men rather than the approval of God. They were blind to the glory and deaf to the voice of the Father, and so would not come to him for life. These sad facts need not be, will not be, pressed against them, seeing that there is a primary accusation already laid. He that (or, *there is one that*) accuseth you, Moses, on whom ye have set your hope (cf. 2 Cor. i. 10); Moses himself, in that very Law which you are now making the ground of the rejection of my claims—Moses is your accuser; Moses appears against you. "This," says Lange, "is the last and mightiest stroke" "Elenchus maxime aptus ad con-

clusionem" (Bengel); *i.e.* "The spirit of Moses is my vindication, the teaching of Moses is typical of mine, the institutions of Moses were symbolic of my coming and work. The predictions of Moses pointed out my coming. The mighty words of Moses will not save you, unless you penetrate to their inner meaning."

Vers. 46, 47.—For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me. The reason for the previous saying is introduced by *γὰρ*. The form of the conditional sentence shows that the protasis is a supposition of an event contrary to the fact. They were *not believing* Moses, though they were putting a vain and illusive confidence in him; and hence they were not believing in Christ. Here is the secret of the antagonism to the Lord. A deeper understanding of their own Scripture would involve an acceptance of the claims of Christ. For he wrote of *me*. The old saying contains Christ's utterance: *Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet*. Reference is made to the great place which Moses gave to the first promise, to the typical deliverances of a fallen world, to the hopes of a redeeming Seed. Christ referred to the Mosaic type involved in the spirit willing to sacrifice the Only Begotten, to the creation of the

birthright-blessing, the visions of the dying Israel, to the blessings on Judah; to the significance of the Law, of the tabernacle, of the Passover, of the Day of Atonement, of prophet, priest, and king, and the very special prophecy concerning a Prophet like unto himself. More than this, Moses had set forth in the Decalogue the portrait-sketch of the perfect Man, of the Divine life which the Lord Jesus proceeded to fill out, to fulfil. He awakened by the Law that sense of sin and sinfulness which the Lord Christ had come to soothe and obliterate. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? "They are easier for you to understand; you have them ever on your tongue. If their meaning is missed, the deeper truths of my words will be more inaccessible to you." The antithesis is rather between the "his" and "my" than between the "writings" and "words." "This charge of not believing Moses, addressed to people who were put in a fury by the pretended violation of one of the Mosaic commandments, recalls other words of Jesus (Matt. xxiii. 29—32), 'Ye build the tombs of the prophets, therefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are children of them that killed the prophets'" (Godet).

### HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—9.—*The cure of the impotent man.* The scene changes once more to Jerusalem. There unbelief develops very rapidly, and there is a foreshadowing of the dread reality: "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Jesus finds himself once more in the very focus of controversy.

I. THE TIME OF THIS MIRACLE. "After these things there was a feast of the Jews." It is generally believed that this was the Feast of Purim. 1. *It was not one of the three great feasts.* 2. *It was a feast in which the Jews gave presents to one another.* Jesus would signalize it by a deed of miraculous beneficence.

II. THE SCENE OF THE MIRACLE. "Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-gate a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches." This was a thermal, intermittent spring, such as are still to be found at Jerusalem, possessing rare curative properties in cases of disease. "The blind, the halt, the withered," gathered round it, seeking shelter in the porches while they were awaiting "the moving of the waters."

III. THE CASE OF THE IMPOTENT MAN. 1. *He had been for eight and thirty years afflicted with impotence in his limbs.* 2. *Perhaps his impotence had some connection with youthful sins and follies.* (Ver. 14.) 3. *He had no strength to enable him to plunge into the bubbling springs as they arose with healing power.* 4. *He had no money to hire a carrier.* 5. *The bystanders, whether sick or hale, had no mercy or sympathy for him.* 6. *Yet he came from day to day in the hope of a cure.*

IV. OUR LORD'S COMPASSION FOR HIM. "Wilt thou be made whole?" 1. *The question was designed to shake off the long apathy of years, and revive the hopes of the afflicted man.* 2. *It was designed to withdraw his mind from the Bethesda waters, and bring him into contact with the Saviour himself.*

V. THE ACTUAL CURE. "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." 1. *The command was accompanied by the exercise of Divine power on Christ's part, and of faith on the part of the impotent man.* 2. *The impotent man walked in the joy of his recovered power.* 3. *The miracle was done on the sabbath day.* It was a deed of mercy, and therefore

suitable to the day. 4. *The miracle was one not to be gainsaid, as this man had been long known to resort to the Bethesda springs in search of cure.*

**Vers. 10—16.—Outbreak of Jewish hostility.** It is not against the miracle, but against an imagined infringement of Mosaic law.

**I. THE CHARGE AGAINST THE IMPOTENT MAN.** "It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." 1. *It seemed justified in the letter by the Divine commandment.* "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day" (Jer. xvii. 21). 2. *But the command related to matters of trade, not of mercy or comfort.* (Neh. xiii. 15.) 3. *The Jews, however, must have their cavil where they cannot deny the working of miracle.* 4. *Formalists affect an extreme reverence for the letter of a law which they neglect and despise in its inmost spirit.*

**II. THE ANSWER TO THE CHARGE.** "He that made me whole said to me, Take up thy bed, and walk." 1. *It was a serious charge, for it involved the punishment of death by stoning.* 2. *The cured man shelters himself under the authority of the Miracle-worker,* implying that he who was able to do such a work must have authority to give him such a command. 3. *He was still ignorant of the name of the Divine Person who had cured him.* "And he that was healed wist not who it was." He had hardly time to make inquiry before Jesus "had conveyed himself away," making an easy escape through the thronging multitude.

**III. THE DISCOVERY OF HIS BENEFACITOR.** 1. *The cured man is found by Jesus in the temple.* His first act is to thank God for his cure. It marks the reality of his faith. 2. *Our Lord's admonition to him.* "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." (1) It is implied that his lifelong affliction had its origin in his sins. (a) There is an invariable connection between sin and suffering established by the moral government of God. (b) Yet it is not possible for man to trace this connection at all times in the midst of the complicated and mysterious dispensations of his providence. (2) It is implied that the Lord proportions his chastisements or his punishments to the degree of sinful provocation attained by transgressors. "Lest a worse thing come upon thee." (a) The lighter chastisement is often sent in mercy to warn against sin and folly. (b) The Lord does not afflict willingly, but for our profit (Heb. xii. 10).

**IV. THE MIRACLE-WORKER MADE KNOWN TO HIS ENEMIES.** "The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus that made him whole." What was his motive in giving this information to the Jews? 1. *It was not a malicious denunciation,* which would only argue the deepest ingratitude on his part. 2. *It was not prompted by the mere instinct of obedience to the authorities.* 3. *It was not designed to shift the responsibility of sabbath-breaking from himself to Jesus.* He here emphasizes the miracle rather than the sabbath-breaking. "It was Jesus that made him whole." 4. *It was prompted rather* (1) by gratitude to our Lord, (2) by the desire to make him known to others in a similar distress, (3) and to bring the Jews to recognize him in his true character. His faith seems to imply a motive of this kind.

**V. THE EFFECT OF THE DISCLOSURE UPON THE JEWS.** "Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus . . . because he had done these things on the sabbath day." 1. *Their action had a double root.* "These things"—the healing and the burden-bearing on the sabbath. 2. *They had no true sympathy with suffering, nor had they any true conception of the nature of their own sabbath.* 3. *The spirit of persecution often springs from ignorance.*

**Vers. 17—23.—Our Lord's vindication of his conduct.** It is summarized in a single significant sentence: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

**I. THE TRUE MEANING OF OUR LORD'S DECLARATION.** 1. *His Father's life is characterized by unceasing activity.* He may have ceased to put forth power in the way of creative energy, but he is still active in the spheres of providence and redemption. 2. *Christ's work is co-ordinate with that of the Father, and not merely dependent upon it.* The assertion implies equality of operation. 3. *The sabbath miracle just performed was part of his Divine activity,* but not on that account inconsistent with the sabbath law. (1) As One "born under the Law" (Gal. iv. 4); (2) as a "Minister of the circumcision" (Rom. xv. 8), he could not repudiate the Law, which was only to cease with his death; but (3) the work of mercy done on the sabbath was really included in the spirit of the Law.

**II. THE JEWISH INTERPRETATION PUT UPON OUR LORD'S DECLARATION.** "Therefore sought they the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." The interpretation was perfectly just, and, accordingly, Jesus, instead of repudiating it, uses four arguments to confirm its truth. 1. *First argument.* *His perfect Sonship involves identity of will and operation with the Father.* "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (1) The Arian infers from the words, "The Son can do nothing of himself," that Christ is not equal to the Father. (2) But the Lord asserts that separate action is impossible on account of the unity of the Father and the Son; and (3) that the action of Father and Son is coextensive in virtue of the sameness of nature. 2. *Second argument.* *The love of the Father to the Son leads to his communicating to the Son* "all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." (1) The Father's love to the Son is based on their essential nature. (2) Love is the perfect revelation of the Father, and is therefore communicative in its very nature. (3) It is through the Son this love of the Father streams downward to believers (ch. xvi. 27). (4) The greater works yet to be done might excite the wonder of the Jews, and leave them without excuse in their unbelief. Wonder ought to excite to faith. 3. *Third argument.* *The Son is joined with the Father in quickening the dead.* "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (1) This work is an act of omnipotence possible to God only. If Christ can do it, he must be God. (2) The work is impossible to man, whether it be regarded as referring to the resurrection of the dead at the judgment-day, or to the spiritual resurrection of sinners in the present life. (3) Christ's power was manifest (a) in raising Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus; (b) in the conversion of many souls during his ministry; (c) and will be still more gloriously manifest in the final resurrection of the dead. (d) He is sovereign in the exercise of his power: "The Son quickeneth whom he will." (a) Yet his will is not independent of the Father's will, for he quickeneth all whom the Father hath given to him. (8) But the salvation that springs out of this quickening is not of works, nor of him that runneth, but of him that sheweth mercy. 4. *Fourth argument.* *Judgment belongs to the Son.* "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." (1) The Father is, in a true sense, Judge of all the earth, but he does not judge without the Son; for he will yet judge the world in righteousness by his Son (Acts xvii. 31). (2) Yet he has committed the judgment to the Son of man. This prerogative of judgment implies equality of Father and Son. (3) The design of this arrangement. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." This text condemns those Socinians who refuse to worship Christ as they worship the Father. (4) The Jews of our Lord's day, like the Socinians of our day, dishonour the Father in the very act of refusing due homage to the Son. "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father who hath sent him." Divine honour can only be given to a Divine person. "My glory will I not give to another," saith God.

**Vers. 24—30.—The two resurrections and the two judgments by the Son.** The views hitherto expressed in a summary form are now exhibited at length in their concrete aspects.

**I. THE NATURE AND RESULT OF THE SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION.** "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." 1. *The two conditions of eternal life.* (1) Knowledge of Christ's will. "He that heareth my word." (a) Christ is the Author of revelation; as the Word, he makes known the Father's mind and will for our salvation. (b) It is a word for hearing, because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. x. 17). "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." "The Word first began to be spoken by him, and afterwards by them that heard him" (Heb. ii. 3). (2) Faith in God. (a) This implies more than belief in God's existence. (b) It implies a heartfelt trust in him as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (c) Faith in God implies faith in Christ (John xiv. 1); (a) because the Father speaks through the Son; (8) because the Father's love reaches man through the Son; (γ) because "our

life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). 2. *The result of this knowledge and faith.* (1) Positively: eternal life. (a) It is a present possession. He "hath eternal life." (b) He has a right and claim to it by virtue of Christ's work, as involving a justification to life. (c) He has meetness for it and the earnest of it in the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. i. 22). (2) Negatively: "He cometh not into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." (a) He is not condemned for original sin, though judgment did pass upon all men to condemnation for it. (b) Nor for actual transgression; for "there is no condemnation to him that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). (c) But is "passed from death unto life." (a) He has escaped from spiritual death; (b) from the second death; (γ) for he has become alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

II. THE EPOCH OF THIS SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." 1. *His words, which were spirit and life, were already preparing the way for Pentecost.* 2. *The coming hour of abounding blessing was to date from Pentecost.* 3. *The blessing of the epoch.* (1) The persons included in the blessing. "The dead." (a) The spiritually dead, alienated from the life of God, dead to all spiritual good; (b) who hear the voice of the Son of God; to whom the Word comes in power, and works effectually in them, receiving, believing, obeying it. (2) The saving voice. "The voice of the Son of God." (a) It is a voice of love, grace, mercy, righteousness, peace, and salvation; (b) it is a voice of power, because it is the voice of the Son of God. (3) The blessing. "They shall live." (a) It will be a life of faith; (b) a life of communion with God; (c) it will be eternal in its duration.

III. THE GROUND OF THIS SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION. "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." 1. *The Son has a self-sufficient life*, essentially and originally like the Father. 2. *But he has a life given of the Father*, in virtue of which it is divinely secured for those whom the Father has given him (1 John v. 11). Eternal life is what the one gives and the other receives in the economy of Divine salvation. 3. *There is thus a double security for eternal life.*

IV. THE JUDGMENT IN THE HANDS OF THE SON OF MAN. "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." 1. *The judgment implies omniscience, perfect holiness, perfect justice, and all other Divine perfections.* 2. *It is committed to the Son of man as a sharer of the nature that is to be judged for the deeds done in the body.*

V. THE FINAL RESURRECTION AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT. "As by man came death, so by man shall come the resurrection of the dead." It was a marvellous truth to proclaim to the Jews, that he who addressed them would raise up the dead and judge them at the final assize. 1. *Mark the certainty and the universality of the resurrection.* "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." 2. *The means by which the resurrection shall be accomplished.* "The voice of the Son of man." (1) Sinners may shut their ears to that voice on earth, but it will be heard in the judgment-day. (2) It is a voice which, re-echoed by the voice of the archangel and the last trump, will have power to awake all the dead without exception. 3. *The twofold end of the resurrection.* "They shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." (1) There will be a judgment of all as surely as a resurrection of all. Believers must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ as well as unbelievers, to receive according to the deeds done in the body (2 Cor. v. 10). But they will receive the judgment of acquittal in virtue of their union with Christ in righteousness and life, while their rewards will be proportioned to "the deeds done in the body." (2) The judgment will proceed upon a test practically applicable to the whole human race—"the deeds done in the body," whether they shall be the deeds of the righteous, issuing out of faith in Christ; or the deeds of the unrighteous, issuing out of an evil heart of unbelief. (3) There will be a final division of the human race into two classes. There will be the sheep and the goats, the saved and the lost, saints and sinners.

VI. THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER. "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Our Lord carries the Jews back to the starting-point of his discourse: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He has now justified his

original statement. 1. *Jesus repeats his declaration of a Divine Sonship.* 2. *He announces the principle of his judgment*—"as I hear, I judge"—which is the principle of all true judgment. 3. *He declares his judgment to be true*, because it is based on his perfect knowledge of the Father's will, to which his own will is infallibly conformed.

Vers. 31—40.—*The witness to the Son.* The Jews might retort that all Jesus affirmed respecting himself had no other support than his own words. His answer is that there is a threefold witness in his favour.

I. OUR LORD ADMITS THE NEED OF A DIVINE SANCTION. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true." 1. *This Witness is God himself*, though his name is not yet mentioned. 2. *It is not John the Baptist.* "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man." (1) Our Lord, by this reference to the Baptist, implied that the Jews ought to have regarded his testimony as decisive upon the mission of Jesus. (2) His object in quoting the Baptist's testimony at all was the salvation of the Jews; for John proclaimed Jesus to be "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." "But these things I say, that ye may be saved." (3) He treats John's testimony as merely provisional. "I receive not testimony from man"—even though he be a prophet; for I have higher testimony. (4) The Jews are without excuse for rejecting Christ, for they delighted themselves for a time in John's ministry, which was essentially preparatory to that of Christ. "He was a burning and a shining lamp: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." (a) John was a lamp that was joyous for a time, for the light and hope he diffused through Israel; (b) but a dying lamp, necessarily decreasing (ch. iii. 30). The Jews regarded him with a strange curiosity, but rejected his solemn warnings of repentance.

II. THE FIRST OF THE THREE WITNESSES TO THE SON. "But I have greater witness than John: for the works which my Father gave me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." His miracles were his first witness. 1. *The Jews could not deny the fact of the miracles.* 2. *The miracles were gifts of the Father to Jesus, and yet works of Jesus himself.* 3. *They were signs to authenticate the Divine Messenger.*

III. THE SECOND OF THE THREE WITNESSES. "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." Jesus here refers to the Father's testimony at his baptism, "This is my well-beloved Son."

IV. THE THIRD OF THE THREE WITNESSES. "And ye have not his Word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." This is the revelation contained in Old Testament Scripture. Jesus implies that he is mirrored in that Scripture. 1. *Consider the importance of searching the Scriptures.* "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (1) The Scriptures are to be made the object of deep search, not mere casual reading. They contain many deep mysteries to task the intellect of man. (2) They contain the knowledge of salvation. (a) The way of salvation was the same under both dispensations. (b) It was attained through knowledge; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." 2. *There is a possibility of men studying the Scriptures and yet rejecting the salvation offered in it.* "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." Man possesses the dread power of rejecting life.

Vers. 41—47.—*The cause and the end of Jewish unbelief.* Jesus has just declared that the Jews will not come to him, and now he reveals its cause.

I. THE CAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF. "I know that ye have not the love of God in you." 1. *This love would oblige them to seek honour only from God*, and thus appreciate the glory the Father has given to the Son. 2. *Jesus has no concern for man's praise or report*, for the Father's testimony is all-sufficient. "I receive not honour from men." 3. *The Jews could not receive this testimony*, because human considerations had blinded their eyes. "How can ye believe, who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?" 4. *Mark the readiness of the Jews to receive false Messiahs.* "If another shall come in his own name, him ye will

receive." Sixty-four false Messiahs have appeared at various periods to receive the temporary homage of the Jews.

## II. THE END OF JEWISH UNBELIEF—CONDEMNATION THROUGH MOSES HIMSELF.

1. *The true accuser of the Jews.* (1) Not Jesus, for he is Judge, not accuser. "Do not suppose that I will accuse you." (2) But Moses, their liberator and advocate. "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, on whom ye have set your hope." 2. *The connection between faith in Jesus and faith in Moses.* "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." (1) Our Lord implies that Moses was the writer of the Pentateuch. (2) He implies that the whole system—promises, types, symbolic institutions of the Law, as presented in the Mosaic writings—found their true fulfilment in himself. Moses truly wrote of Jesus in the memorable prophecy, "I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee" (Deut. xviii. 18). (3) Disbelief in Moses carried with it a necessary disbelief in Christ. "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (a) The writings of Moses might be regarded as possessing greater weight, because they were contained in a book, than mere words of mouth. (b) They had all the prestige of age and usage. If, therefore, they were rejected in their true import, how could the Jews be expected to receive the oral teaching of him to whom the writings bore witness?

## HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 6.—*The will to be healed.* This miracle is indeed a parable. The pitiable condition of the sufferer, the prolonged duration of his calamity, his utter helplessness and despondency, all have their analogues in the spiritual state of the sinful. And, on the other hand, the exercise of Christ's Divine authority, the condition of blessing imposed upon the infirm man, and the immediateness and completeness of the cure, are all suggestive of the terms, the process, and the results of salvation. The language in which Christ addressed the sufferer, with a view to elicit his faith, is especially instructive: "*Wouldest thou be made whole?*"

I. IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT WHEREVER THERE IS A SPIRITUAL MALADY THERE IS ALSO A CONSCIOUSNESS OF IT AND A DESIRE TO BE DELIVERED FROM IT. Jesus did not take it for granted that, because the man had an infirmity of long standing, he was therefore anxious to be relieved from it. As a matter of fact, he *was* so anxious; and the presumption is that men *do* wish to be delivered from bodily and temporal ills. It is not so in all cases with spiritual disorders. It was a reproach against the self-righteous that they knew not that they were poor, naked, blind, and miserable. Sin is not always accompanied by consciousness of sin. Long familiarity with vice and crime, and still more with that alienation of heart from God which is the essence of sin, is often found to render the nature insensible to its own wretched condition and prospects.

II. EVEN DIVINE MERCY DOES NOT ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF HUMAN CONFESSION, FAITH, AND DESIRE. The truth is that it *cannot*; for God cannot override the nature with which he has himself endowed his creatures. He may annihilate that nature; but, whilst it remains, he cannot contradict himself by acting independently of it. And, further, he *will not* dispense with the appointed human conditions, for the sake of his own moral government, whose sacredness he will surely maintain, and for the sake of the spiritual welfare of those whom he governs. It may appear, on a superficial glance, that in taking this view we magnify the free-will of man above the sovereignty of God; but reflection convinces us that this is not the case. There is nothing arbitrary in the Divine government; and infinite Wisdom has decided that without the voluntary co-operation of man the highest blessings must be unattainable.

III. WHERE THERE IS A DISPOSITION AND DESIRE ON THE PART OF MAN, DIVINE MERCY WILL NOT WITHHOLD THE GRACE OF SPIRITUAL HEALING. There is no place for human power; we can do nothing to heal our spiritual diseases. There is no place for human merit; we can do nothing to deserve a Divine interposition. Yet he who will be made whole, who accepts the Deliverer and welcomes the promised deliverance, shall experience the healing power of Immanuel. Let there be willingness, let there be faith in Christ, let there be submission to Divine plans and order, and there is no

sin for which pardon cannot be obtained, no character for which it shall be found that there is not provided renewal and spiritual health.—T.

**Ver. 11.—*Christ who saves is Christ who rules.*** This poor sufferer excited the Saviour's sympathy and pity, and Christ healed him without delay. And it is noticeable that the word of healing was also a word of command: "Take up thy bed, and walk." The authority of the Divine Physician was acknowledged by the patient who had received the benefit. That authority was felt to be capable of overriding the letter of the ceremonial law. And the man who had been made whole, when censured by the formalists for carrying his couch on the sabbath day, naturally enough fell back for his vindication upon the command of the great Healer. He was bound to do the bidding of him who had set him free from a protracted infirmity, and had thus established a claim upon his grateful obedience.

**I. OBSERVE THE TWOFOLD NATURE AND NEED OF MAN.** 1. Human nature is distinguished by a *capacity* for feeling and by a *faculty* of energy. 2. Consequently a Divine Saviour must both relieve him of his pains and infirmities, and at the same time give a new direction to his practical powers. The double need requires a double grace.

**II. REMARK IN CHRIST THE DISPOSITION TO PITY THE SUFFERER, TO PARDON THE SINNER, TO RESTORE THE DISORDERED TO MORAL HEALTH AND HARMONIOUS ACTIVITY.** The miracles of healing which Christ wrought (in number more than two-thirds of the whole, as recorded by the evangelists) are an abundant proof both of his compassion and of his power to save. The variety of human ills with which he dealt may be taken as symbolizing the sympathy of Jesus with all the sorrows and errors of humanity, and his power to heal, to harmonize, and to bless.

**III. REMARK NO LESS IN CHRIST THE HABIT OF RIGTEOUS AND AUTHORITATIVE COMMAND.** Christ's was the authority of holiness, of helpfulness, of love. This authority was acknowledged by nature, by demons, and especially by men. He was felt to speak as One "having authority;" he drew forth the exclamation, "What manner of man is this!" When he spoke the word of command, rigid Jews broke without compunction the tradition of the elders, and helpless cripples willed to use their hitherto powerless limbs. All this denoted the right of the Son of God to rule over human hearts and consciences, over individual conduct, and over social life.

**IV. CONSIDER THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE SAVED AS WITNESSING TO THE LORDSHIP OF THE SAVIOUR OVER THOSE WHOM HE HAS REDEEMED.** 1. So far as the Lord himself is concerned, his healing grace witnesses to his Divinity, and his Divinity involves his control over his own subjects. 2. So far as they are concerned who are healed by the Redeemer, it may be said that gratitude and love give efficacy to those purposes of obedience which are formed in the presence of his rightful authority and power. The heart responds gratefully and affectionately to the interest exhibited and the healing mercy exercised by Jesus, and looks up to its best Friend for guidance and for help. There is no law so powerful as the law of love, and no obedience so thorough and cheerful as that of gratitude.—T.

**Ver. 17.—*The incessancy of Divine ministry.*** Healing is work. The sabbath is for rest. Thus the Jews, in their rigid formality, objected against Jesus that, in restoring the infirm and sick man to health and vigour, he had transgressed the Law, because he had wrought the cure upon the sabbath day. The calumnies and persecutions of his enemies were met on the part of Christ by these simple and significant words: "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." There is no pause in the Creator's beneficence, none in the Saviour's ministrations.

**I. HERE IS TEACHING UPON THE RELATION OF THE FATHER AND THE SON.** The Jews were quick to discern the claim implicitly contained in the language of Jesus. He was "making himself equal with God." This he did, both by speaking thus of his "Father," and by asserting of himself what was true of no mere man, but of God only.

**II. HERE IS TEACHING UPON THE UNINTERMITTING CONTINUITY OF THE DIVINE OPERATIONS.** Christ gives no countenance to the very common notion that God created the universe, as a mechanic may a machine, leaving it when wound up to do its work, with no energy exercised, no interest shown, no interference taking place on the part



of the Creator. God is ever working. In all the laws of nature, in all the movements of society, we are justified in tracing his ever-present and most beneficent hand.

III. HERE IS TEACHING UPON THE PARAMOUNT AUTHORITY OF THE LORD CHRIST. What dignity is there in the assertion of our Master, "I work"! He came to this earth in order to work; his life among men was a life of toil. "I must," said he, "work the works of him that sent me, while it is day." Especially did he work in the vanquishing of human ills, and in the promotion of human purity and well-being. His work was not only wise; it was effective. Satan worked; Christ counter-worked. Christ worked with Divine efficiency.

IV. HERE IS TEACHING UPON THE RELATION BETWEEN CHRIST AND MEN'S VIEWS AND PRACTICES WITH REFERENCE TO RELIGION. The Jews cavilled and quibbled, made much of trifles, were strict in ceremonial observances. How did the Lord and Saviour act in view of Jewish formalities? "I work!"—such was his reply, his rebuke. They might talk and find fault, they might forget the sufferer and the sinner in their exaltation of the Law. The Lord showed them a more excellent way, when he quietly but assiduously did the work for which he came into the world.

V. HERE IS TEACHING UPON THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY. If the Father and the Son concur in working, and if their work is incessant, what must be the vocation of the representatives of Christ, the servants of God? Surely their ministry must needs be one of toil. And if even the sabbath was a suitable occasion for the performance of a miracle of healing and of mercy, can Christians put the Lord's day to a better use than they do when they spend its hours in seeking the salvation of mankind?—T.

Ver. 18.—*Offence with Christ.* It might have been expected that a Saviour so compassionate and so beneficent as, even from an ordinary human point of view, Jesus undoubtedly was, would have met with a warm and grateful reception. Especially, it might have been expected, would his own countrymen, the neighbours and acquaintances of those who were benefited by his kindness, have encompassed him with honour, confidence, and affection. But it was not so; and Jesus was not surprised, for he well knew what human nature is. Again and again in the Gospel narrative do we meet with statements regarding the offence taken at Jesus by the Jews, and the hostility they cherished towards him.

I. THE OFFENCE WAS USUALLY TAKEN WITH SOME WORD SPOKEN BY JESUS WHICH HAD A PECULIAR PRECIOUSNESS, OR WITH SOME DEED THAT DESERVED ESPECIAL HONOUR. Those who in their life and work moved upon familiar lines, who fell in with the prejudices of their country and their times, escaped censure and commanded confidence. But the discourses of Jesus were paradoxical, and the deeds of Jesus were novel and surprising. It was when he said something altogether above the spiritual level of his contemporaries, when he wrought some work worthy of God himself, that the hostility and malice of the Jews was aroused. And if any one will observe upon what grounds the unbelievers of our own time take offence at Christ, he will find that the "scandal," the stone of stumbling, is something deserving of admiration and of reverence.

II. OFFENCE WAS TAKEN WITH JESUS BECAUSE HE WOULD NOT CONDESCEND TO THEIR PETTY AND FORMAL NOTIONS OF RELIGION. The sabbath was a divinely instituted ordinance, and one obviously beneficial and beautiful. But the Jews confounded the means with the end, and attached a superstitious sanctity to the seventh day. Jesus was the Lord of the sabbath, and held that the day was hallowed by the performance of a deed of mercy and helpfulness. This was a view alien from the formal and ceremonial habits of the Jewish leaders. The ways of Jesus were too high, too spiritual, for these narrow-minded hypocrites, and accordingly they were offended with him.

III. OFFENCE WAS TAKEN WITH JESUS BECAUSE HIS OPPONENTS COULD NOT RISE TO HIS GLORIOUS BUT JUST REPRESENTATION OF HIS OWN NATURE AND MISSION. The claim which Jesus made to identity of purpose and to closest intimacy of nature with the Divine Father should have awakened in the minds of the Jews, at least, a spirit of inquiry, and have suggested, at least, the hope that in this gracious Being God might be visiting and redeeming his people. This, however, was far from being the case.

The higher Christ's claim, the ruder the resentment of his adversaries. It may be questioned whether they really believed in God at all; had they done so, how could they have avoided the conclusion that God was "in Christ"?

IV. THE OFFENCE WITH JESUS LED TO THOSE PURPOSES AND PLOTS WHICH ISSUED IN HIS DEATH. The impression produced upon the Jewish leaders by our Lord's ministry in Jerusalem was one of hostility; and this hostility was deepened by every great act of Divine authority he accomplished, and by every bold and sublime utterance which either explicitly or implicitly rebuked their formality and unspirituality. Thus their "offence" deepened into malice and rage. They "stumbled" at the miracles by which the Lord asserted and explained his claims. Repeated "offence" issued in resolute plots against his life. And Jesus thus came to the cross not because of his faults, for he had none; but because of his righteous claims and his peerless beneficence. His death was a witness against his foes as fully as it was a witness in his own favour.—T.

Vers. 19, 20.—*The Father and the Son.* Most of our Lord's discourses concern man and his spiritual life, are moral and practical. But this passage is, in the true and proper sense of the term, *theological*, informing us of the relations between the persons of the Godhead, and revealing, so to speak, the inner springs of our Saviour's ministry, by giving us a glimpse into the Divine nature and purposes.

I. THE FATHER IS EVER CARRYING ON BENEFICENT OPERATIONS IN HUMAN SOCIETY. The whole discussion originated in the cure of the infirm man at Bethesda; this being wrought on the sabbath occasioned the murmurings of the Jews, and elicited the defence of Jesus. Now, an ordinary physician, had he effected such a cure, would have been rightly satisfied to fall back upon the fact that the man's sufferings were relieved, and that human strength and comfort are an abundant justification for any measures not morally wrong. But the Divine Physician fell back upon the working of God in the world and among men. What he says does not remove all mystery, for he tells us nothing to explain the existence of sin and of suffering. But he does give us to understand that God is ever working among men in the very way in which he—Jesus himself—had been working, when he had healed the infirmities of the sick.

II. THE FATHER, LOVING THE SON, SHOWS HIM WHAT THINGS HE IS EVER DOING. This language is, of course, accommodated to our powers of comprehension. However the world, or the Jews in particular, might hate Christ, he was the beloved of the Divine Father, and as such was admitted to the Father's intimate and affectionate confidence. What a qualification for him who came to this earth as Prophet, Priest, and King of humanity! How wise a provision was thus made for our salvation! A perfect sympathy exists between the Personal Power of beneficence in the universe and the Teacher, Saviour, Lord of man.

III. THE SON, SEEING THE FATHER'S WORKS, DOES THE SAME IN HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY AND IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS MEDIATORIAL SOVEREIGNTY. Here was the all-sufficient vindication of our Lord's miracles themselves, and also of their manner and circumstances. The Father is ever working for man's welfare, on the sabbath as on other days. Every day of the week his sun shines, his air passes gently over the earth, his streams flow, his flowers bloom, his birds sing, his creatures rejoice in his bounty and kindness. He is all day long and every day promoting not only the bodily, but the intellectual and spiritual welfare of his dependent children. And what the Father does, that the Son does, moving amongst men, seen or unseen, a Presence of grace and comfort, of inspiration and of peace. Thus he ever works his Father's works, and forwards the cause which is dear to the Father's heart. Where we see the triumphs of the Gospel in individual hearts, in human society, let us recognize the tokens of the Saviour's holy and benevolent ministry, and be assured that this is the work of God himself.

IV. THE PAST OPERATIONS OF DIVINE MERCY ARE A PLEDGE OF GREATER AND MORE MARVELLOUS WORKS IN THE FUTURE. Our Lord, unlike a human teacher or leader, always represented what he did as only the promise of greater and better things to come. This assurance of his foreknowledge was verified in the marvels of Pentecost, and in the fruits which have been yielded throughout the long centuries of the spiritual dispensation.—T.

**Vers. 22—27.**—*The human Judge upon the Divine throne.* Many are the offices which it is appointed for the Son of man to hold. Yet they are all consistent one with another, and only a complete view of them can present Christ as he really is, and can elicit towards him all those sentiments which are justly due to him. If he is the Saviour of sinners and the Friend of his people, he is also the Lord of the earth and the Judge of all mankind.

**I. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF CHRIST AS JUDGE.** As represented by himself, these are two. 1. His Divine ability of knowledge, of authority, of justice, in virtue of his nature as Son of God. This is asserted in the claim he makes in ver. 22 of equality with the Father, and of a consequent right to the same honour which is accorded to the Father. 2. His participation in our human nature implied in the designation "Son of man" in ver. 27. This true humanity of our Lord ensures that all judgment shall be conducted not only with Divine knowledge and equity, but with human sympathy and consideration.

**II. THE PERSONS OVER WHOM CHRIST EXERCISES HIS JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS.** All mankind must stand at his bar; God hath committed *all* judgment unto him, and a day is appointed in which God will judge *all* men by the Man Christ Jesus. Friends and subjects, enemies and rebels, alike must receive sentence from his lips.

**III. THE PRINCIPLES WHICH DIRECT CHRIST'S JUDGMENT.** Of these two may be mentioned. 1. The thoughts and intents of the heart are considered as well as outward actions. 2. With respect to those who have been privileged to hear the gospel, the all-important question is—Did they receive or reject the Divine Mediator, the offer of Divine mercy?

**IV. THE DISTINCT PERIODS OF CHRIST'S JUDGMENT.** 1. There is judgment *here and now*, as seems implied in ver. 22. Christ is ever passing judgment upon men, criticizing their character and their action, discriminating between the evil and the good, making allowance for human infirmities on the one hand, and for human endeavours on the other. It is well for us that Christ judges his people now; that when necessary he has a controversy with them; that he has words of reproach for the unfaithful, and words of encouragement for the depressed; that he chastens his people in kindness and with purposes of love. It is for them to submit themselves to their Lord, to bow before his chastising hand, to profit by his correction. 2. There is judgment *hereafter*. Life has to be considered, not only in detail, but as a whole. When it is finished, then is the time for it to be duly estimated and justly recompensed. Now, our Lord himself assures us that retribution in the life to come is his peculiar work. The anticipation of this process should quicken our spiritual diligence and solicitude. The sinner may well repent and seek acceptance, so that he may recognize his Saviour upon the judgment-seat; and the Christian may well prepare to render in his account "with joy and not with grief."—T.

**Ver. 25.**—*The voice that reaches the dead.* The dispute between Jesus and the unwilling and unbelieving Jews was a dispute as to our Lord's authority, dignity, and power. The attitude of his enemies constrained the Lord to adopt language the boldest and most uncompromising with regard to himself and his offices. Thus it was that he was led in the course of this discussion to advance his claim of authority over such even as were spiritually dead.

**I. THE STATE OF SPIRITUAL DEATH.** I. Its *cause* is sin, wicked departure from the God of life. 2. Its *tokens* are—insensibility to spiritual realities, incapacity for spiritual exertion, and unfitness for spiritual society. 3. Its *effects* are apparent both here in this world, and hereafter in the future state of retribution.

**II. THE SUMMONS OF THE SON OF GOD.** 1. It is the summons of One who has life in himself; as is apparent from his power, several times exercised in the course of his ministry, to raise the dead, and even more strikingly from his own glorious resurrection. 2. It is conveyed in a voice in itself authoritative and Divine; and yet a voice of invitation and of promise.

**III. THE RESPONSE OF HEARING AND REVERENT ATTENTION AND OBEDIENCE.** 1. This is by no means universal, being rendered only by those who are awakened by the influences of the Holy Spirit to some susceptibility to the spiritually authoritative tones and language of the Son of God. 2. It is the hearing of the soul which our

Lord requires as the condition of life. The Old Testament admonition and promise are appropriate in this connection: "Hear, and your soul shall live." The frequent invitation, or rather summons, addressed to the people by the Saviour should be borne in mind: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Many listened to his discourses who never really heard *him*; and it is so now with His gospel.

IV. THE GIFT OF LIFE. 1. This life which is conferred by the Son of God is *spiritual*. In a subsequent part of the discourse, Jesus claims to be endowed with authority to raise the dead to the life of the future state; but here the life which is promised is of the spirit. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The spiritual character of this life appears from the references to that with which it is in contrast: "You hath he quickened, who were dead through trespasses and sins." 2. It is *dependent* life, derived from the source of spiritual vitality. Of himself the Lord Jesus says, in the following verse, that he possessed life, as his own, "in himself," by the appointment of the Father. But Christians derive their new life from him, who came "that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly." 3. It is *immortal* life, in this being distinguished from that of the body. In the preceding verse Christ describes it as "eternal," by which we may understand that it consists in participation in the Divine nature and in the Divine immortality. Thus the new life in Christ is independent of that of the body, whose dissolution indeed is the occasion of its higher development and true perfection.—T.

Ver. 39.—*The Scriptures and the Christ.* Jesus is expostulating with the Jews, who refuse to admit his claims, to accept his salvation. The course of his argument and censure is somewhat thus: "You revere and examine the canonical Scriptures. You profess to think of them so highly that you regard them as the source of eternal life for men. Yet you will not yield faith and allegiance to *me*. What inconsistency is here! The true value of the Scriptures lies just in this, that they bear witness to me, that they are intended to lead you and all who read them to me. The fact is, that you *rest in* the Scriptures, instead of being *led by* the Scriptures to me, who am Life Eternal. Thus the Word fails to fulfil in your case its intended purpose."

I. THE SCRIPTURES WITNESS TO JESUS AS THE CHRIST. 1. This is so with the Old Testament, which was in our Lord's mind when he used this language. In the Old Testament there are recorded some explicit and direct predictions which are fulfilled in Jesus; whilst the symbols, sacrifices, and services of the old economy in many instances point to him who should come. No Christian can read certain of the psalms, or certain passages from the writings of Isaiah and of Daniel, without tracing prophetic outlines of the sufferings and of the reign of the Messiah. 2. It is obvious that this is still more strikingly the case with the New Testament, to which, of course, our Lord could not be referring here, but which we are bound to search, and in which we are sure to find abundant witness to Jesus as the Christ of God and the Saviour of men. The Gospels and Epistles are full of Christ; they relate facts, they offer doctrinal explanations, they draw practical inferences, all of which have a bearing upon human salvation.

II. THE SCRIPTURES ARE THUS THE MEANS OF ETERNAL LIFE TO MANKIND. By "eternal life," the most comprehensive of all phrases employed to denote spiritual enrichment and blessing, we are to understand the life of the soul, the life which is Divine. Now, this is a boon which the knowledge of the mere letter of Scripture can never impart. It must be communicated by the quickening Spirit of God, and is conveyed through that Mediator, who is in himself the life of God, and who becomes, by his humiliation, obedience, and sacrifice, the life of man. He himself professed and promised to bestow this boon: "Come unto me, that ye may have life;" "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." If we know Christ in and through the Scriptures, we may be justly said to owe to them the incomparable gift of life eternal.

III. THE SCRIPTURES SHOULD THEREFORE BE STUDIED AND SEARCHED BY EVERY ONE DESIROUS OF SPIRITUAL BLESSING. 1. In what spirit? With a reverent sense of their Divine origin and authority, and with a high conviction of their priceless value. 2. With what intent and view? Not for curiosity's sake, nor for secular ends, but for spiritual improvement. 3. In what manner? Systematically, and not in a desultory

fashion; with all accessible human aids, and with prayer for Divine enlightenment and assistance.—T.

Vers. 1—9.—*The Help of the helpless.* Here we have—

I. JESUS ATTRACTED BY MISERY. Why was Jesus found at Bethesda? Because there were such misery and need. He was ever found where he was most wanted, and where he might do most good. He was not found in places of luxury, but in the haunts of misery. 1. *The misery was great.* There was presented to the eye of Jesus there such pain, degradation, poverty, and misery, physical, mental, and moral, as could scarcely be described, and all presented to him together in one scene. 2. *The misery was various.* It was not confined to one disease, but embraced many classes—"the impotent, the halt," etc. The diseases were various in their kind and history, but all baneful branches from the common stem of physical and moral disorder. 3. *The misery was distributed among a great number.* There was a multitude. The porches were full, and doubtless many could not be admitted for want of room. Physical suffering is the heritage of the human family, and the special heritage of some. It is a mercy that suffering is distributed. We only know of One who could and did bear all in himself—"the Man of sorrows," etc. 4. *All were waiting and struggling for the same blessing, viz. restoration to health.* With what anxiety they would watch the moving of the waters, and what efforts they made to have the first bath! To this place Jesus was attracted. Being the incarnation of mercy, he was attracted by misery. The whole scene was such as would naturally excite his compassion, and stood forth as a picture to him of a more terrible and universal malady, that of sin, which he came to take away.

II. JESUS SPECIALLY ATTRACTED BY THE MOST MISERABLE. They were all miserable enough, but there was a certain man standing alone in misery and helplessness. 1. *He was impotent*, perhaps paralytic, thoroughly helpless, and unable to plunge into the healing pool, and had no one to help him in. 2. *He had been a long time in this condition.* Thirty-eight years. The best part of his life was spent in pain and misery. He had only just sufficient life left to feel his pain and woe. 3. *He was almost in the grip of utter despair.* Impotent in mind and will as well as in body. He had been there for years, and doubtless was the sport of the more fortunate, and the prey of despair. Still he mechanically crawled there day after day, with an occasional glimmer of hope that some good chance would turn up. And it turned up at last. Jesus, the Son of God, was there, and this poor man became the chief object of his pity. He doubtless pitied the multitude, but the most miserable riveted his compassion. The most helpless and miserable became the most fortunate.

III. JESUS HELPING THE MOST MISERABLE. We have here : 1. *A wonderful question.* "Wilt thou," etc.? We see: (1) *The importance of the consent of the will in physical as well as spiritual recovery.* Christ did not choose to help people against their will. The consent of the will is essential to the efficacy of even Divine influences, especially in spiritual restoration. It is the first step towards it. (2) *Christ was anxiously willing to help every one who had the wish for it, and even more, he was anxious to create and encourage the will so as to be able to lay hold on the help.* In consequence of long and repeated failures to get relief, even the will for it now in this poor cripple seemed to be weak; but Jesus fans the smouldering embers with the question, "Wilt thou," etc.? This is a vivid picture in the physical domain of the indifference and apathy of men with regard to spiritual recovery. But this is an exceptional picture, for as a rule men are intensely anxious for health of body. Look at the multitude at Bethesda; what struggle they make to be the first in the moved water! But in a lamentable contrast to this is the conduct of men with regard to the water of life; they seem to struggle to be the last there. The appeal is made by the physician to the sick, and not as usual by the sick to the physician. God in grace first prayed to man, and thus teaches man to pray to him, and create in him an interest in his own welfare. "Wilt thou," etc.? (3) *The question brings from the man a sad tale.* A tale of human helplessness on the one hand, and of human selfishness on the other. The "will" was not entirely gone, but it was very weak through his own helplessness and the stolid selfishness of others. "Sir, I have no man," etc. "Every one for himself" was the rule then. A picture of life. "The survival of the fittest" seems to be the law of nature under sin; but there is a law of grace by which the seemingly unfittest may survive, and its question is, "Wilt

thou," etc.? There is a gracious power on which the weakest may lay hold. 2. *A wonderful command.* "Rise," etc. In this command we distinctly hear: (1) *The voice of Divine power.* "Rise." This he was utterly unable to do. "Take up thy bed." As well tell the bed to take him up. Every human power had failed even at earlier stages of the disease. And human power never speaks thus under such circumstances but in madness. But is natural in the Divine. (2) *The voice of Divine authority.* Divine power and authority go together. There is here a Divine will, and a Divine right and power for its immediate execution. There is no hesitancy, no timidity, but full and serene Divine consciousness of power to carry out his will, and make the man whole. (3) *The voice of Divine mercy.* Power alone, or swayed by justice, could kill and perform any miraculous feat of destruction, as in the case of Lot's wife; but infinite power, under the guidance of mercy, heals and saves, and that most completely. "Whole." Amidst the thunders of power and the majestic lightnings of authority we hear the genial voice of mercy answering its own question, "Wilt thou?" etc., by the command, "Rise," etc. 3. *A wonderful effect.* "Immediately the man was made whole." Consequent upon the command an effort was made; strength came with the effort. The effect was instantaneous; the miracle was complete and thorough. The man rose and walked away; a wonder to others, not less to himself, and an unmistakable monument of Divine power as well as Divine mercy.

CONCLUSIONS. 1. *Jesus selected his own object.* The most helpless and miserable. This was a most gracious act to the man himself. And this most helpless and furthest from the reach of human aid, answered well the purposes of Jesus in revealing himself as the Son of God. Among the suffering throng there was not one who answered this purpose so well. The greatest misery attracts most of the relieving compassion of Jesus, and when relieved will redound most to his glory. 2. *Jesus often helps in a manner and degree which we should not expect.* This poor cripple never expected more than to be helped to the pool; but Christ made him whole by his mere word and will. "He is able to do exceeding abundantly," etc. 3. *What Christ did physically to this man, he is ready and willing to do spiritually to the human race.* The human family by sin are spiritually impotent and helpless. Christ, in the gospel of his love and power, asks the question to each, "Wilt thou," etc.? If they are willing, he is willing and able. 4. *There is much suffering in the world, but there is mercy here as well.* The world is a Bethesda, the house of mercy; Jesus has made it so. Every healing spring in nature, as well as the river of life, is from him.—B. T.

Ver. 14.—*Suffering alleviated by the removal of sin.* Notice—

I. THAT IT WAS THE GREAT AIM OF JESUS TO ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERINGS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY, AND MAKE THEM WHOLE. We see: 1. *That the human family are subject to great sufferings.* This is too patent to require proof. It is the universal experience of all. These are various and great. (1) *Physical sufferings*—those arising from the infirmities, diseases, and ultimate mortality of physical life. (2) *Mental sufferings*—those arising from personal and social afflictions, bereavements, disappointments, slander, failures of every description, and the mysterious problems of being. (3) *Moral sufferings*—arising from a sense of guilt; the unreconciliation of the soul with God, and its consequent unsettled and painful spiritual state. 2. *It was the great object of Christ to alleviate and remove these.* To this he devoted his life and energy. He did this by sympathizing and guiding words, by merciful deeds, and by his vicarious death. In all his life and death, "surely he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

II. TO ATTAIN THIS AIM IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT SIN SHOULD BE DONE AWAY WITH. "Sin no more." 1. *Sin is the direct or indirect cause of all sufferings.* All the sufferings of the human family, whether physical, mental, or moral, are traceable to sin. "The wages of sin is death" in all the departments of human being. The sufferings of this poor cripple were the direct consequence of his sin. Physical and spiritual nature invariably punishes the violation of its laws with suffering. 2. *The cause must be removed in order to remove the effects.* You must dry the fountain before you can dry the stream. As long as there is a fountain there must be a stream. As long as there is sin there must be suffering. Effects must follow causes. 3. *The removal of the cause must be followed with the removal of the effect.* Dry the fountain, there will be no stream. "Sin no more," there will be no suffering. We have a practical illustration

of this in this world. In the degree sin is lessened suffering is lessened, and even with regard to the extent of suffering for which we are not directly responsible the pain is not unnatural. We have a revealed illustration of this from the other world. In heaven there is no sin, and there is no suffering. In hell there is unmixed sin, and there is unmixed suffering. Suffering must end with sin, not before; but then it will.

III. To do away with sin requires Divine and human co-operation. "Sin no more." This is the Divine voice appealing to man for his consent and co-operation against sin. 1. *This appeal presupposes two things at least.* (1) That to resist sin effectually is a possibility. In connection with what Christ has done and is doing, and what man can do, this is possible. We are not asked to perform impossibilities. A similar help which accompanied the effort to rise and walk, will accompany the effort to resist sin. (2) That to resist sin is a most binding duty. It is each man's duty to God, to himself, and to others. 2. *This Divine appeal is made to man's moral nature.* (1) To his individual consciousness. "Sin no more." Men are to be restored, not in the abstract, but in the concrete. Not as multitudes, but as individuals. Each man is directly appealed to. (2) To his individual sinful consciousness. "Sin no more." Thou hast sinned, thou art a sinner. The Divine voice appeals to man as a sinner; thus his sin is brought home to him. This is an essential step to its removal, and unless an assenting echo comes from within, the Divine power has nothing to work upon. (3) To the powers in man which can distinguish and resist sin. His conscience and will. The one can distinguish between good and evil, and the other can say yes or no to its dictates, as well as to the dictates of Heaven. Conscience is ever on the side of good, and against evil and such. The will is not; hence to educate the conscience, and stir up and gain the human will to the right side, is the chief aim of Christ and his gospel. 3. *This Divine appeal is made through the most powerful motives.* (1) *Those arising from considerations of sin itself.* (a) Experience of its evil consequences in the past. "Lest a worse thing come unto thee"—implying that its consequences in the past were bad. The sin of this man had cost him thirty-eight years of untold suffering and misery; only a faint shadow of its spiritual consequences. Every hell is against sin, and sin really is against itself. Man should learn from his failures, and grow wiser by experience. (b) *Its certain worse consequences in the future.* "Lest a worse thing," etc. (a) However bad has been the experience of sin, its worst has not been yet felt; there is something worse in store. (b) A repetition of sin tends to its final issue. Every repetition fixes it deeper in the character, and makes it more difficult of cure. It is in the very nature of sin to go from bad to worse, and the next step in it may lead to the worst of all—to utter inability to resist, and the consequent impossibility of relief. This should be a strong motive against sin, and a mighty influence to incline the will against it. (2) *Those motives arising from considerations of the Divine goodness.* "Behold, thou art made whole." (a) Deliverance from the painful consequences of sin is not a sufficient guarantee against falling into it again. The danger may be greater. It will be a point at which the man will be specially attacked; and if it becomes strong, it must become so by special watchfulness and prayer. (b) Deliverance from the painful consequences of sin should be a strong motive not to commit it again. "Behold, thou," etc. This should awake (a) a sense of special duty—not to sin. (b) A sense of special obligations to the Deliverer. (c) A sense of special gratitude to him for the deliverance. And this can never be manifested while sin is wilfully committed, for it is as detestable to God as it is ruinous to man. (c) All the special and general goodness of God in providence and grace is in order to keep us from sin. With Divine eloquence it tells each man, "Sin no more." This is the case especially with regard to our personal deliverances. And if these will not keep us from sin, what will?

LESSONS. 1. *Christ cured bodies in order to cure souls.* His physical cures were introductory to the spiritual. He performed the miracle of Bethesda in order to teach the lesson of the temple: "Sin no more." 2. *No cure is complete unless the soul is cured of the disease of sin.* Jesus sought the man in order to finish his work. At Bethesda it was incomplete. How many are satisfied with the introduction! But Divine goodness is wasted unless it is carried out to its natural issues, the restoration of the soul. 3. *To keep away from sin is better than to be delivered from it.* Prevention is easier and safer than cure. Prevention is ever possible, cure is not. It is possible to be in the palsy of sin where there is no Divine Physician. 4. *Jesus helps*

*man in order that man should help himself.* He helped this man and did for him what he himself could not do. He made him whole. He was then in a position and under an obligation to do something for himself. "Sin no more." 5. *In order to keep away from sin, we should ever remember its terrible consequences and our gracious deliverances.* We should be reminded of these, for we are very forgetful. There was a danger that this man should forget this between Bethesda and the temple; therefore the first thing Christ did was to remind him, "Thou hast been made," etc.—B. T.

Ver. 24.—*Eternal life.* Notice—

**I. ITS NATURE AND IMPORT.** 1. *It is the spiritual life of the soul.* It is called "eternal life," not merely as distinguished from temporal and fading, but also from material and carnal. The soul by sin has lost its spiritual life, its primitive purity, harmony and happiness arising from the peace and friendship of God. The soul left God like an erratic star from its central sun, and is truly described as being dead—dead to God and its highest interest. This life is the life of God within. His Law written in the heart, and his image restored in the soul. A life having its roots in God, its vitality from him, germinating and budding in the genial soil of his peace and friendship, growing and blooming in the sunshine of his love, and under the reviving dew of his presence and influence. This is the highest life of which the soul is capable. It is its true life—real, and not a mere form. 2. *This life is in and through Christ.* Having lost our spiritual life by sin, it is evident that we must have it from a Divine source, and through a Divine medium, and under a new and Divine arrangement. Christ is this Source and Medium. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. "I am come that they might have life," etc. As we derive our natural life from Adam, we derive our spiritual life from Christ, the second Adam. 3. *This life is a blessing to be attained.* It comes not with us into the world. We have many things in consequence of birth. We are born with all the privileges of manhood; but not with eternal life. This we must attain, and to attain it is the chief end of life. If we had eternal life simply as men, we would not be urged to get it, seek it, and make every effort to lay hold of it. 4. *It is to be had on certain conditions.* These conditions are as set forth here—knowledge of and faith in the Divine Father and the Son: "He that heareth my word," etc. Every life from the lowest to the highest has its conditions, and these must be complied with ere that life can be enjoyed. Eternal life has its conditions. To know and believe the Author, the Source, and the Giver of this life is essential to its enjoyment. This natural, reasonable, and gracious as the conditions are suitable, easy, and within the reach of all. 5. *It is to be had on these conditions now.* As soon as its conditions are complied with, eternal life is begun in the soul. "Hath eternal life." Some speak of it as if it were entirely future, whereas it must be had in the present or never. This world is the only birthplace, and the season of salvation is the only birthday of eternal life. All those who enjoy it in heaven found it on earth. 6. *It can only be fully enjoyed in the future.* Being eternal, it must have eternity to develop itself fully. What is eternal in duration cannot reach maturity in time; what is spiritual in nature cannot be fully enjoyed under material conditions. All terrestrial life reaches a climax under terrestrial laws and circumstances; but spiritual life requires spiritual conditions, and naturally demands eternity in its full length to expand and develop its beauty, fruition, and happiness. 7. *It is a life without end.* "Eternal life." Every life here has an end, but one—spiritual life—Christ-life in the soul. This is eternal, and worthy of being so. The life of the body has an end; and when we consider its vanity, emptiness, privations, and sufferings, we are glad that it has. There is nothing in it, as a whole, to make endlessness desirable. There is no life, but that of God in the soul, worthy of being qualified by the word "eternal;" this has all the elements to make it worthy of eternal continuance. Eternity in the possession of this life will make up the sum of all the happiness man is capable of.

**II. ITS BLESSED RESULTS.** 1. *There is a wonderful immunity.* "Shall not come into judgment." Much of the blessings of redemption consist, not in what we shall enjoy, but in what we shall evade; and this will be a great evasion. "Shall not come," etc. And why? Because it is passed. Eternal life and judgment are opposed to each other, and are respectively the results of faith and no faith in Christ. Judgment is in the region of death, but the believer has come out of that. There can be no real



judgment for the possessor of life. "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" In this case the final examination is in the preliminary. Pass this, and you pass all. 2. *There is a wonderful transition.* "From death unto life." (1) This transition is *wonderfully great*. Death and life are diametrically opposed. The moral distance between them is immeasurable; the change involved is, therefore, great. There is a change of nature, of condition, of sphere, of character, of prospects, of world. The passage from death unto life is morally long, and the transition wonderful. (2) The transition is *Divine*. Every one who undergoes this transition must undergo a Divine process. The voice of God alone can make the dead in trespasses and sins hear. His power alone can bring them back to life. His infinite love can warm and quicken the soul into spiritual vitality; cause the heart to beat, and the blood to course so as to result in a new and Divine life. What is human in the process is lost when compared with the Divine, and God is all in all. (3) The transition is *real*. It is not a passing dream, but a glorious reality; a genuine passage of the soul from a state of spiritual death to that of spiritual life. That it is real is evidenced: (a) By the believer's experience and consciousness. He does not feel the same man. And he is right; for he is a new man. "I live, but not I," etc. His experience is quite different. "Who was before a blasphemer," etc. (b) There are the ordinary proofs of life. It is not very difficult to distinguish between a dead and a living body, and not much more difficult is it to distinguish between a dead and a living soul. Mark the difference in the man—in his habits, his temper, his character, his language; they are unmistakable evidence of the transition. (c) The emphatic testimony of Christ. "Verily, verily," etc. (4) The transition is *free*. It cost infinitely to God. Before a single soul could be transmitted from death unto life, God's only begotten Son had to suffer the most ignominious death. But what we have to do in the transition is only to believe and submit; only to jump on board the ship of life, and the passage is free. (5) The transition, though great, is *quickly made*. We hear of quick passages made across the oceans, but they are all physical distance. To the moral distance between death and life, they are the moral poles of the universe; but the passage is quickly made. Only believe in Christ. The quickest passage, perhaps, on record is that of the thief on the cross. In the morning and even at midday he was in the empire of death and one of its extreme regions; but by an act of faith in Christ he was, before the close of that day, with Christ in one of the regions of life—in Paradise. (6) The transition is a *most happy one*. "From death," etc. (a) The happiness of the greatest deliverance. (b) The happiness of the highest promotion. (c) The happiness of perfect safety. (d) The happiness of an ever-increasing enjoyment—the enjoyment of a holy, spiritual, and ever-young and growing life. (e) The happiness of a never-ending gratitude.—B. T.

Vers. 28, 29.—*The two resurrections.* 1. *The effect of Christ's preceding discourse on his hearers was wonder.* "They marvelled." 2. *The teachings and deeds of Christ were well calculated to produce this emotion in all.* 3. *Each manifestation of his power and glory was only introductory to something greater still.* "Marvel not at this," etc. The two resurrections—the resurrection of life and that of judgment. Notice—

I. *THEIR SIMILARITY.* 1. *In the physical condition supposed.* The subjects of both are dead, and described as being in their graves. The good die as well as the bad. They lie down and sleep together; their graves are often in close proximity to each other, and their dust is mingled together. They are under the same physical condition, that of mortality and complete dissolution. 2. *Both are similar in their wonderful effects.* Both are resurrections. There will be a quickening into life, into full conscious existence. There will be a reunion of body and soul after a long separation; the physical effects will be similar in both. The good and the bad shall hear, and come forth. 3. *Both are the result of the same Divine power.* (1) *The Agent* is the same in both. "The Son of God." To raise the dead is the prerogative of Divinity, and by the power of the Son of God shall the good and the bad be raised. As the resurrection forms a most important part of the great scheme of redemption, it most befittingly falls to the Redeemer's lot to do it. He has the right and the power; and it will be exercised on this occasion on all, irrespective of character. (2) *The process* in both is the same. "Shall hear the voice of the Son," etc. There will be an outward manifestation—a

voice—and there will be a response. The same voice can awake the good and the bad. They would sleep on for ever unless called by him. The voice of angels would be ineffective. But all will hear and know his voice, and come forth. Even the Son of God never addressed such a vast congregation before at once, and never with such unexceptional success. How many of his sermons missed the mark! But this grand resurrection sermon will not fail in a single instance. All shall hear and come forth. 4. *The subjects of both resurrections shall come forth in their own and true character.* As good or evil. Neither the sleep of death nor the Divine process of the resurrection can produce any change in character. Whatever a man soweth that shall he reap. The resurrection will not change this law, but help to carry it out. Character will cling to us for ever. 5. *The subjects of both shall come forth in their true character—according to the character of their deeds.* “They that have done good, and they that have done evil.” Character in both cases is formed by actions; so that the resurrection will be the same in its process to both classes. It will be fair to both—a faithful reproduction, not merely of the physical and mental, but also of the moral and spiritual self. Identity will be preserved intact. No one will have any reason to complain. 6. *Both are similar in their certainty.* The resurrection of the good and bad is equally certain. “All that are in the graves shall hear,” etc. There is an absolute necessity for both, and there is an adequate power. Divine physical power is irresistible; Divine moral power is not so. What is absolutely necessary must come to pass. The good must be raised for the purposes of grace, the bad for the purposes of justice.

II. IN THEIR DISSIMILARITY. 1. *Dissimilar in the character of their subjects.* The subjects of one are those who have done good, the subjects of the other are those who have done evil. And between good and evil there is an essential and an eternal difference—a difference which neither eternity nor omnipotence can efface. Good will be good and evil will be evil at the last day, and the difference will be more strikingly seen. 2. *Dissimilar in their results.* (1) One is the *resurrection of life*, the other is that of *judgment*. Those who have done good will not be raised to judgment, for they have passed from death unto life. Therefore they must rise unto life; the highest, the truest life of the soul—a life like that of Christ himself. The other is the resurrection of judgment, of condemnation—the opposite of life. (2) The one is a *reward*, the other is *punishment*. Life is the natural consequence of goodness and faith in Christ; still it is a reward and a Divine favour. The resurrection and its consequences will be a reward to the good, but punishment to the wicked. It would be mercy to them to let them sleep on; but justice demands their resurrection to receive the wages of sin, which is death. (3) The one will be *followed by a glorious ascension*, the other by a *horrible descent*. Those who have done good will come forth to rise for ever in the ever-increasing enjoyment of a pure, happy, and endless life; while those who have done evil will rise to sink deeper in spiritual death. The reunion of body and soul to the good must intensify their happiness. To the wicked it must intensify their misery. What a difference there is between the good man being awaked to join his family at the breakfast-table and at the mercy-seat, and the culprit being awaked in the morning to undergo the terrible sentence of the law! This is but a faint illustration of the difference between the resurrection of life and that of judgment.

LESSONS. 1. *We have passed through many important crises, but the most important and marvellous one is yet in store.* “The hour is coming,” etc. A most important and wonderful hour! Time and eternity in an hour! We should live continually in that hour. 2. *The inseparable connection between the present and the future.* Our future is in our present, and our present will be reproduced in the future. 3. *The importance of well-doing in the present.* Let us hear the voice of the Son of man, now that we may welcome the voice of the Son of God in that hour. The physical process of the resurrection is entirely future, with which we shall have nothing to do. The spiritual process is going on now, and by Divine help we can shape our own resurrection and determine whether it is to be one of life or of judgment.—B. T.

Vers. 39, 40.—*A commendable search and a sad failure.* We have here—

I. A COMMENDABLE SEARCH. Commendable because: 1. *It is a search for the proper object.* “Eternal life.” (1) This is *man’s greatest spiritual need*. This he lost by sin. When he sinned, he died spiritually. He became dead to God and virtue. But when he

lost his spiritual life, the craving for it remained. Eternal life is felt by man to be his greatest spiritual need. (2) This is *man's highest good*. It is his greatest spiritual need, and is calculated to develop all his spiritual capacities and satisfy all his spiritual wants. This is the climax of being. Nothing higher can be given, nothing higher can be desired. (3) This is the *most important object that can engage the attention of man*. His greatest need, his highest good, and any attention bestowed upon it and any effort put forth to secure it is praiseworthy. 2. *It is a search for the proper object in the proper field*. "The Scriptures." (1) *Eternal life is a subject of revelation*. This is natural and essential; it must be so. It is evidently beyond human discovery. "Eye hath not seen," etc. Eternal life and the way to obtain it must come from the source of life. (2) *Men in all ages have looked for it* in connection with some kind of revelation, either oral or written. The human race have instinctively looked for it in the direction of the Divine; they searched for it in every voice and book purporting to be Divine communications, as instanced in the oracles of the Greeks and Romans, the Shasters of the Hindoos, etc. (3) This search for it is made in *the true revelation*. "Ye search the Scriptures." All other revelations are false and imaginary, but the Scriptures are the true revelation of God's will and gracious purposes—a revelation of eternal life. They are "they which testify of me." 3. *The chief object is sought in a praiseworthy manner*. "Ye search," etc. The Scriptures, as the revelation of God's will, are worthy of the most diligent search. No search can be too minute and no effort can be too thorough. Eternal life is a pearl to be found by search. These people searched the Scriptures, and in the time and efforts they bestowed on this, they were patterns to the present age.

II. A BAD FAILURE. 1. *They failed to recognize Christ as the great Theme of the Scriptures*. 2. *They failed to learn the testimony of Scripture to Christ as the Life of the world*. (1) As the *Source of life*. (2) As the *Author and Giver of life*. (3) As the *Support of life*. (4) As the *perfect Pattern of life*, in its development, progress, struggles, and final triumph. The very Scriptures which they searched emphatically and unitedly bear witness to Christ as the Life of the world, and as the Author and Giver of spiritual life in the soul. This witness they failed to recognize, this testimony they failed to understand. 3. *They failed to come to Christ to have life*. Our Lord suggests the reasons for this. (1) Want of *inward religious integrity*. "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." "You have not the Word of God abiding in you;" and, having neither his love nor his Word in them, they failed to accept his most precious gift. (2) Want of *spiritual discernment*. They could not see through the letter to the Spirit; could not see the Son of God in the Son of man, nor the Divine Saviour in Jesus of Nazareth. (3) Want of *self-surrender*. "Ye will not," etc. Surrender of their prejudices, of their carnal notions, and of their wicked conduct. This was the chief reason of their terrible failure in relation to Christ and eternal life. 4. *This failure is very sad*. Because: (1) *Their best energies were wasted*. There was much search, but all in vain. Their labour was spent for that which satisfieth not, and their money for that which is not bread. This is life wasted, energies misapplied. (2) *The chief good was lost*. "Eternal life." How sad, after so much search! (3) *Lost while so near to them*. In the very Scriptures they so diligently searched. The Author and Giver of eternal life was in their nature, in their midst, preaching in their streets, teaching in their synagogues, performing mighty deeds before their very eyes, and uttering the words of eternal life in their ears. Still they lost the highest good. They were in the field, but missed the pearl; they had the casket, but missed the jewel. (4) *Lost while they ought to find it*. They had the best advantages—the testimony of Scriptures, of John, of the Father, and of the mighty works of Christ himself. To lose an important thing through misfortune, or through something which could not be helped, is sad enough, but to lose eternal life while it could be easily attained is sadder still. This was the case with the Jews, as well as with all who have the gospel.

LESSONS. 1. *The chief good may be very near and yet missed*. This was the case with regard to the majority of Christ's hearers, and this is the case still. It is so near, but how often missed! 2. *Much commendable search of Scripture may be made in vain*. Many students of the Bible are scripturally rich but spiritually poor. "Ever learning," etc. 3. *It is not enough to search the Scriptures, but we must search them with the proper end in view*—with open eyes and open hearts. We should not stop

with the letter, but dive down to the spirit and drink of the living water, accept the Life—the Christ of the Bible. 4. *How little is enough to keep us from the chief good!* A want of will is sufficient. Look at the rich young man; only one thing was lacking. And look at these Jews; it was only the “will not” that stood between them and eternal life. 5. *In Christ alone eternal life is to be found.* 6. *We must come to him for it, or be without it.* 7. *The importance of the subject and the Divine aids should ever decide the will in favour of Christ.* To know the Scriptures and not know the Christ of the Scriptures is very sad.—B. T.

Ver. 6.—*A remarkable question of Jesus.* A remarkable question, truly! and if we did not know who asked it, it would be reckoned a thoughtless and somewhat silly question. But Jesus, we know, must have had weighty reasons for asking it. It looks plausible to assume that a man who had been thirty and eight years ill must assuredly have wanted to be cured; but, after all, the assumption is badly founded. It was certainly better to make the man whole than to leave him impotent, but it does not at all follow that the man would feel it to be better amid the experiences of his new state. Thirty and eight years would fasten a man down to the habits of a dependent invalid, and the perfect recovery of physical strength by no means guaranteed that he would be fit in all other respects to use the strength he had gained. Those who had willingly helped him in the days of his incapacity would now say, “Get you gone and seek work; earn your bread as others do, by the labour of your hands.” Who can doubt that the man soon had cause to reflect over the question of Jesus, and admit that it was a question full of meaning? The question, then, we see, was just the question to put to this man; and more than that, it is a question which all need to answer.

I. IT REMINDS US OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRITUAL MALADY. Jesus is the great Physician, and comes to benefit the sick. When he talks so much of himself as the Giver of new life, what does this mean but that the old life is not sufficient? When men are ill in body they know that they are ill, and are quick to seek for remedies. But men take a deal of persuading and humbling and emptying of self before they can see the need of healing from Christ.

II. IT REMINDS US HOW WE MUST TAKE THE TRUE WAY TO SPIRITUAL HEALING. Notice the answer the impotent man gives to Jesus. He proceeds to explain that he is doing his best according to his light and opportunity. The only thing he knows of is to wait at Bethesda till his chance comes, and it is plain it never will come. And so to us, taking all sorts of traditional ways to ease the troubles of the breast, Jesus comes, and in the midst of all our failures says there is real healing if only we take the right way.

III. IT REMINDS US OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW AND BETTER STATE. From this poor man in his helplessness little was expected. When he was healed he would have to enter on a life of struggle, duty, and self-reliance. When Christ lays down before us of the riches of his grace, a great deal more is thereby expected from us.—Y.

Ver. 14.—*The Healer's warning.* I. HE WHO WARNS HAS THE RIGHT TO SPEAK. It is not a mere stranger who comes up. He who speaks has rendered the greatest services to the man he addresses, and his warning for the future is based on his service in the past. So to speak, the healing would have been incomplete but for the giving of the warning. There are diseases the origin of which is not traceable; there are other diseases distinctly traceable to the evil-doing of those who suffer from them. This man might surely have said, even as did the Samaritan woman, “Here is One who told me all that ever I did.” Many would speak to the healed man, and their utterances would only move him to say that they knew not what they were talking about. “Sin no more,” says Jesus. That seemed to point back to some act or course of evil-doing far away in the past, forgotten by most who had ever known it, and to many not known at all. But he who had the power to heal had also the power to know. If in after years this man neglected the warning and fell into suffering, all the bitterer would that suffering be in recollecting that he was so clearly forewarned against it.

II. JESUS WOULD HAVE HEALTH RESTORED, WHATEVER THE CAUSE OF ITS LOSS MIGHT BE. Jesus did not come first of all to the impotent man, reminding him that all these

long years of infirmity were the consequence of his own evil-doing. The man knew that well enough, and in all likelihood lamented bitterly over his folly. All sufferers demand sympathy; sufferers through their sin most of all. Jesus did not begin lecturing the impotent man as he lay by the pool. He healed him first, and then spoke plainly, even severely, to him after.

III. WHAT JESUS GIVES MAN MUST GUARD. While this poor man lay helpless, many temptations passed him by. Now that he was well again, temptations would crowd in upon him. The tempter says, "You are getting old; the years are few: make up for what you lost all the time you were so helpless." Jesus could easily make fresh physical energy pour into every organ and member of this disabled man. But when it was a question of making him spiritually strong, then he had to be appealed to in a very warning way. What a dreadful possibility Jesus presents to the man! "A worse thing may happen to thee." What can be worse than a life of physical suffering? And yet there are degrees even in that. More sin might mean even worse bodily suffering, though it is almost certain Jesus meant the ruin of the whole nature.

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEALTH. Those in full vigour of body and mind must not be astonished when they are spoken to plainly. If they are not careful, their very strength and capability work out all the more evil. When we mourn over promising lives made useless by bodily infirmity, we must remember another aspect of bodily infirmity, namely, that people who might have done great mischief have thereby been made harmless.—Y.

Ver. 36.—*The witness-bearing works of Jesus.* I. THOSE TO WHOM THE TESTIMONY WAS OFFERED. Jesus had done two things which exceedingly shocked and horrified the Jews of Jerusalem. On the sabbath day he had healed an impotent man, and told him to take up his bed and walk. He had also said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. The words, the deeds, and the appearance of Jesus seemed contradictory to those who would not wait to look under the surface, but judged everything by their own traditions and prejudices. And when Jesus was confronted by all this prejudice and narrow-mindedness, all he could do was to go on with his work and his witness-bearing. Not for himself he needed to fear anything, but he did fear for those who were blind to his claims. The hearts of men had got so hardened and their minds so twisted, that the true was reckoned to be the false, and the right to be the wrong. It did no harm to Jesus that he should be called sabbath-breaker and blasphemer, but it did great harm to those falsely calling him so. Hence he tries, quietly and patiently, to get them to examine into the evidence for his claims. Jesus never wanted people to take his bare word. He knew that false Christs would go out into the world, and therefore he would furnish ample and comforting evidence that he was the true Christ. Somehow or other, there were immense difficulties in the way of people receiving Jesus as the Christ of God. But they were not difficulties that Jesus made. Jesus is on our side against the difficulties. The works of Jesus, going on from day to day, gradually mounted up to a body of testimony, on which the faith of a sincere heart could build as on a foundation of rock.

II. THE WITNESS-BEARING WORKS. John was a witness, but Jesus had greater witness than that of John. Jesus did not speak in any way depreciatory of John. The best of men may not be the best of witnesses. John told people where to look. He fixed their attention on Jesus, and they were then to watch what Jesus would do. From our own observation of Jesus we know far more than ever John could have told us. The deeds of Jesus speak with unsurpassed power and tenderness to those who are disposed to listen. There they lie in their simple beauty and depth of suggestion, waiting till we look at them and search into them and put them together, investigating to their very depths, so that whatever witness-bearing power is in them may be brought out to the full. What men say about Jesus is all very well in its way, but what we can see Jesus himself doing is far better. He means that we should, as it were, see him with our own eyes.

III. OUR RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE THIS WITNESS-BEARING. We may neglect to examine into these witnesses, but that does not prove them unworthy of our closest study. Jesus knows his own. What you are disinclined to look at just now, you may be eager to search into by-and-by. Thousands pooh-pooh the reality and possibility

of the works of Jesus, measuring the possible and the impossible by their little experience. Supposing what happened to Martha and Mary happened to them, and one of their dearest was raised from the dead, where would their incredulity be then? Those Jews who so savagely charged Jesus with breaking the sabbath must surely have been men whose own persons and dearest friends had been untouched by suffering. We are responsible, too, for examining into all the works of Jesus—works in the spiritual sphere as much as in the natural; works like the conversion of Saul of Tarsus as much as the resurrection of Lazarus. It is indeed a great responsibility to be face to face with the testimonies from more than eighteen centuries of Pentecostal power.—Y.

**Ver. 44.—A special hindrance to faith.** Jesus deals with the numerous obstacles to faith one by one, as they rise up. And observe, too, that Jesus is here dealing, not only with unbelievers, but with mortal enemies. Some looked on Jesus and listened to him, and then went away, as little touched by hate as by love; others were so filled with falsehood and pride, and zeal of God not according to knowledge, that almost every word of Jesus caused a fresh and violent irritation. Such could do nothing but oppose Jesus, and make their unbelief hideously manifest in their works. And Jesus knows the reason for all this violence in unbelief. These opponents of his have wrong views as to the true glory of human nature. Jesus could never have a glory that would please them.

**I. MAN'S TOUCHING CONSCIOUSNESS THAT HE COMES SHORT OF HIS GLORY.** For it is *glory* rather than *honour* that Jesus is here speaking about. The word is *δῶα*, not *τιμή*. Glory is the manifestation, the full bringing out of what is inside. Honour is the value, the price, so to speak, which others put upon us. These enemies of Jesus, according to the judgment he expresses upon them, were men seeking a glory which would not come by any natural development. If it came, it had to come by their wishing and seeking. The glory of the lily in its clothing comes by the mystery of its creation; the glory of Solomon comes by what he gathers to himself. Jesus looked upon men, every one of whom was conscious he had done something, had achieved for himself a position of sanctity and success which made it right for others to honour him.

**II. MAN LETTING HIS GLORY BE DETERMINED BY FRAIL HUMAN JUDGMENT.** When ambition gets into our hearts, we crave for those eminences and splendours which the world, in its fondness for the outward and visible, will readily recognize. Jesus could not be recognized for what he was, because he could not be measured by the standard to which his enemies habitually appealed. It was not that he came short of the standard; he could not be measured by it at all. It was as if a man who had nothing but liquid measures should be asked to determine the length of a piece of cloth. These enemies of Jesus could not even understand him. He set at naught the glories, the aims, and the sanctities they held dearest. They let glory be determined by human traditions and the self-seeking notions of the natural heart.

**III. HOW SEEKERS OF GLORY CAN COME TO A REAL FAITH IN JESUS.** They must see how in Jesus there is the real, abiding, everlasting glory of humanity. In Jesus there was the glory that cometh from God—the glory of a pure heart, a gentle spirit, a perfect integrity; the glory of a life that best shows forth the glory of God. This was the glory of Jesus, that he glorified the Father. In the Son, those who had eyes to discern could see all of the eternal glory that was within the reach of human perceptions. As long as these enemies of Jesus remained in the same mind and clung to their cherished standards, so long Jesus would be impossible to their faith. Our attitude to Jesus infallibly determines our real worth. We are unconsciously judging ourselves in judging him.—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

### CHAPTER VI.

**Vers. 1—71.—2.** Christ declares himself to be the Sustainer and Protector of the life of which he is the Source.

**Vers. 1—13.—(1)** The supply of human wants illustrated by a well-known "sign" of power.

Chronological difficulties beset our treat-

ment of this miraculous narrative with its varied consequences and results. Many curious and even violent measures have been resorted to with a view to solve them. Some have supposed that ch. v. and vi. have been inverted in order, and that thus the presence of our Lord in Galilee, mentioned in ch. iv., would account for the statement of ch. vi. 1 and the journey to Jerusalem of ch. v. 1, be brought into closer relation with ch. vii. We cannot see the faintest indication or evidence whatever of any such treatment of the Gospel by the authors of the manuscripts or the quotations or versions. The evangelist has just completed his record of the conflict between Jesus and the recognized leaders of the people in Jerusalem. He had introduced our Lord's own vindication (based on the highest grounds) of his own right to deal with the rabbinical restrictions upon sabbath duty. These grounds were the eternal relations of his own inner nature and consciousness with the Father's. On no occasion had Christ made the uniqueness of his personal claims and powers more explicit. He called for entire obedience to his word as the condition of eternal life, and as the key to the Scriptures of God. If we had no synoptic tradition to give a closer historical setting of the narrative which here follows, we might take Meyer's view, and say that the "after these things" (*μετὰ ταῦτα*) of ver. 1 referred to the discourse of the previous chapter, and that the "departed" (*ἀπῆλθε*) referred to Jerusalem as its starting-point; and, notwithstanding the extreme awkwardness of the expression, we might have supposed that "the other side" of the sea was the other side of it from Jerusalem (cf. ch. x. 40; xviii. 1). Some commentators appear to have a morbid fear of reducing a difficulty, or seeing a harmony, between these four narratives. One thing is clear, that they are independent of one another, are not derived from each other, do each involve side views of the event distinct from the rest, and yet concur in the same general representation. The synoptists, however, place the "feeding of the multitudes" in the midst of a group of most remarkable and varied events. It is for them one page out of many descriptive of the Galilean ministry, and which ultimately

led to grievous departure from and diminution of the temporary popularity of the great Prophet. It would seem that bitter hostility, as well as excited enthusiasm, was checkering his early ministry. The synoptics take pains to show the combined effect of his self-revelations (1) on his own fellow-townsmen (Luke iv. 16—30; Mark vi. 1—6); (2) upon his own family (Mark iii. 19—21, 31—35); (3) upon the populace (Matt. xv. 31); (4) upon Herod Antipas (Mark vi. 14—16); (5) upon the twelve disciples (Matt. xvi. 13—28); (6) upon John the Baptist (Matt. xi. 3); and (7) upon the Father in heaven (Matt. xvii. 1—13 and parallel passages). The canvas is crowded with scenes, the signs and wonders of healing and teaching are abundant. The blind see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the demons are exorcised. The twelve apostles are chosen, the sermon on the mount is delivered, the twelve are sent forth in every direction with the proclamation of the coming of the kingdom and with the call to repentance, and an excitement produced by the mission of the twelve had proved to be extensive. The crowds throng him; they have no time even to eat bread. And we judge from Luke ix. 10 that this very excitement, amounting to feverish self-glorification on their part, appears to have been one at least of our Lord's motives for the temporary withdrawal of his disciples from the multitudes. Another event of singular significance contributed to the same result. Matthew (xiv. 12) takes the opportunity of describing the tragic close of John's imprisonment, and relates how John's "disciples came to tell Jesus" of the bloody deed. A sudden panic was felt by the multitude. A crisis had arrived. The great Prophet must avenge his forerunner's death or lose his hold upon the affections of the fickle mass. The people appeared to the eyes of Jesus (Mark vi. 34) "as sheep without a shepherd." He had compassion on them, but he must make them understand the nature of the royalty as well as of the realm of the Messianic King.

The true grounds for Christ's retirement are not incompatible, but mutually explanatory. The death of the renowned forerunner, of the idol of the multitude brought vividly to the mind of the Lord his own death—the

foreseen sacrifice of himself. The conviction that he must give himself to a violent death—give his flesh to the hungry and starving multitude, made the decadence of his popularity in Galilee a certain consequence of any right apprehension of his mission or claims. This mastery over the powers of nature which his compassion for others prevailed on him to manifest would be misunderstood. The moral and mystic meaning of it was far more important than the superficial inferences drawn by the Galilæans. The real lesson of the miracle would grievously offend them. But it sank deeply into the apostolic mind, and hence the various aspects which it presents in the fourfold narrative. John selects this one specimen of the Galilæan ministry on account of its typical character, and records the high and wonderful results which the Lord educed from this high and striking manifestation of his power. There is, moreover, remarkable correspondence between the fifth and sixth chapters in this respect, that Galilee, like Jerusalem, recoils from the highest claims of Jesus, and developed an antagonism or an indifference as deadly if not as malignant as that which has displayed itself in the metropolis. "He came to his own, and his own received him not."

Ver. 1.—After these things (see note on ch. v. 1; not *μετὰ ταῦτα*, which would mean after this particular scene in Jerusalem)—i.e. after a group of events, one of which may have been this visit to the metropolis, but which included also the early Galilæan ministry as presented in the synoptic narrative, and with which John and his readers were familiar—Jesus departed from the side of the sea on which he was, and as we may judge (ver. 24) from Capernaum, now known to be his chief resting-place, most probably the home of his mother, brothers, and nearest friends, to the other side of the sea of Galilee, of Tiberias; or, of the Galilæan sea of Tiberias. It does not follow that the evangelist had the southernmost portion of the lake in his mind (as Meyer suggests). Tiberias was the showy city built by Herod Antipas on the western shore of the lake. Herod called the place after the name of Tiberius Cæsar, and conferred upon it many Gentile characteristics. From the time of Antipas to that of Agrippa it was the chief town of the tetrarchy. After the destruction of Jerusalem it became for centuries the site of a celebrated school of Hebrew learning, and

one of the sacred cities of the Jews. Jewish tradition makes it the scene of the last judgment and the resurrection of the dead. It was a modern city, which may account for the omission of its name in the synoptic narrative. Christ never visited it that we know of. He preferred the fishing village of Bethsaida, or the more thoroughly Hebrew aspect of Capernaum. Nevertheless, "Tiberias" gave to Gentile ears the best and least dubious designation of the lake. So Pausanias (v. 7. 3) calls it the *λίμνη Τιβερις* ("the lake Tiber"). Luke (v. 1) calls it the "Lake Gennesaret," and Matthew and Mark "the Sea of Galilee" without any other epithet. John (xxi. 1) calls it "the Sea of Tiberias." This multiplicity of lake-names, due in the first instance to some peculiarity of the including shores, finds easy parallels in Derwent-water and Keswick Lake, and in the "Lake of the Four Cantons," called also "Lake of Luzern," etc. Christ sought retirement from the surging crowd, and for himself and his excited disciples a time of rest and communion with the Father, who had accepted, as part of his Divine plan, the awful sacrifice of the life of John the Baptist. He went "by ship," says Matthew (xiv. 13) to a desert place. In Luke's account this solitary place was towards or near (*εἰς*) a city called "Bethsaida." It is difficult to believe that this is the familiar Bethsaida or "fishing town," situated a little south of Capernaum, because we are met in the account of Mark (vi. 45) with the statement that, after the miracle, the disciples were urged to go to the other side of the lake (*πρὸς Βηθσαιδάν*) towards Bethsaida. This, compared with ver. 17, is obviously in the same direction as Capernaum. Indeed, the term, "Bethsaida of Galilee," referred to in ch. xii. 21 (as the Apostle Philip's residence), seems used with the view of distinguishing it from some other place of the same name. Now, Josephus ('Ant.' xviii. 2. 1) mentions a *Bethsaida Julias* situated on the north-eastern extremity of the lake. The ruins of this city may be still seen on the rising hilly ground which here retires somewhat from the river and the lake. It was situated in *Gaulonitis*, in the tetrarchy of Philip, and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of Herod, yet not far from the road into Peræa by which the Galilæan pilgrims to the metropolis might be expected to travel. The silence of these hills provided the opportunity of retirement. But it was frustrated by the eager excitement of the multitude.

Ver. 2.—There was following him a vast crowd, because they were spectators of<sup>1</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (6th and 8th edit.), Meyer, T.R., read *ἐξ ὧν*, with N, F, A, Δ, Π, etc.; Lechmann, Tregelles, R.T., with B, D, L,



signs he was working on those that were sick. The imperfect tenses here reveal a period of time that had elapsed; a group and series of healings which had touched the heart of the people. Their "following" had not been by ship, but round the head of the lake, and across the ford of the Jordan, which is still situated about two miles from the point where the river flows into the Sea of Galilee. The multitudes would easily learn the direction of the well-known boat with its solitary sail, and would be, some of them, ready at the landing-place, to greet the Lord on his arrival. Many hours might elapse before the crowd had reached such vast proportions as we subsequently find. It may easily have been swollen by curious and inquisitive pilgrims, or by the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, intent on a sight of the Prophet who had preached the sermon, who had spoken in wondrous parables, who had given such striking proof that "God was with him."

Ver. 3.—And Jesus went up into the mountain; i.e. the high ground which everywhere surrounded the lake. The same expression, *eis τὸ ὄρος*, occurs very frequently in the synoptist Gospels (Mark iii. 13; Matt. v. 1; xiv. 23). This last passage is an interesting confirmation of our text. The usage implies on the part of the four evangelists familiar acquaintance with the scenery. And there he sat down<sup>1</sup> with his disciples. From this elevation they would see the gathering multitudes streaming from different points and meeting on the pebbly beach, asking each other where was the Master? and whither had the Prophet, the Healer, fled? Women and little children are in the crowd (Matt. xiv. 21). Weiss, who argues that the main features of the narrative are deeply imbedded in all the traditions, summarily disposes of the later accounts of the similar event recited by Mark (viii. 1—11) and Matthew (xv. 32—38).

Ver. 4.—Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. The ordinary meaning of *ἐγγύς* need not be departed from (cf. ch. ii. 13; vii. 2; xi. 55). This valuable note of time is confirmed by another hint incidentally dropped. A month later than the Passover it could not be said that "much grass" was in the place. In the

late spring such a phrase would most inadequately represent the scene that was indelibly impressed on the fourfold tradition. Whatever the unnamed feast was (ch. v. 1), whether Trumpets, Purim, or Passover, we have reached the month Abib, when the crowds of pilgrims were gathering for their southern journey. If the Purim were the unnamed feast, then the suggestion arises that Christ's reception at Jerusalem had prevented his remaining until the Passover of that year. If the Passover be meant (ch. v. 1), then a year has passed between ch. v. and vi. Nor is this a day too long for the crowd of events and teachings recorded by the synoptists as having taken place before the death of John. The note of time may be recorded as implying the dominant sentiment in the minds of the people. The great deliverance from Egyptian bondage was burned into the national conscience, and the fanatic desire for a second Moses to lead them out of Roman servitude was at such seasons fanned into a flame. The Lord had his own thought about the Paschal lamb, and knew that God was preparing a Lamb for sacrifice. In mystic, parabolic sense he foreknew that men would and must consume the flesh of this sacrifice. He was ready, moreover, to show them that he could supply all their need. The great Prophet who had said of himself, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" had just fallen beneath the executioner's axe. The people were bereft of a great prophet and leader, and to Christ's eye they were "as sheep without a shepherd." Verily he was preparing to lay down his life as a good Shepherd for these sheep—to provide for them in the future a feast of living bread. All this may rationally be admitted, without for a moment conceding that second-century *ideas* like these were the formative causes of the narrative. The miracle that follows stands on an entirely distinct basis, and is more powerfully attested than any other miracle, except the resurrection of Christ. If it stood in John's record alone, there might be some colour for the supposition that we have merely a parable of great beauty. But the threefold tradition long anterior to John's Gospel deprives even the pseudo-John of the possibility of inventing it. On the other hand, the appearance of the narrative in John's Gospel deprives it of the mythical character which some have attributed to the authors of the synoptic Gospels. Thoma, in the spirit of Strauss, here imagines that the synoptists were busy in fashioning a miracle of sustenance and a portent upon the waters—a sign on land and sea—to correspond with the manna and Red Sea marvels of the Book of Exodus. "The

read *ἐδῆσαν*; A, *ἐδεῖσαν*. The *αὐτοῦ* is omitted by modern editors, Meyer, Westcott and Hort, Godel, on very strong authority—N, A, B, D, K, L, etc., Italic, Syriac, Vulgate, and Coptic.

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, with N, D, 13, 69, 124, read *ἐκαθέσθην*, "was sitting;" *ἐκάθητο* of T.R. is preferred by R.T., Alford, and Tregelles, on the authority of A, B, L, Γ, Δ, etc.

mountain" (τὸ ὄρος) is, as he thinks, a similitude of the Mount Sinai, and, as the latter represented the giving of the Law, this was associated with the mountain of Beatitudes. He goes further, and sees in the Johannine narrative the Christian (*agapæ*) feasts, and the deliverance of the Apostle Paul from shipwreck! He is even more ingenious still, and suggests that the "five thousand" fed at the first miraculous meal, with twelve baskets of fragments, correspond with the results of the first preaching of the twelve apostles, and that the seven loaves among the four thousand reflect "the many hundreds" who were benefited by the seven evangelists. He endeavours by a most elaborate process to make it appear that John has here combined into one tableau minute traces derived from the five several accounts of the two miracles. The old rationalistic theory was that the miracle was only an exaggerated poetical statement of the fact; that a good example of charity on the part of the apostles was followed by others, and so food was found for the entire multitude. This hypothesis breaks on the rock that the authors of these Gospels intended to convey a perfectly different idea. The effect of such cheap philanthropy and pragmatic travesty of a royal act would not have been that the multitudes would have rushed to the conclusion that he had done a kingly deed, or one in the least way calculated to suggest the notion that he could feed armies at his will. All efforts to extirpate by such theories the supernatural character of the occurrence fail, and force the reader back upon the plain statements of the fourfold narrative.

Ver. 5.—Jesus therefore, seated with his disciples on the rising ground in full view of the lake with its shipping and its fringe of villages, and of the gathering crowds of pilgrims to the Passover, having lifted up his eyes, and having beheld that a great multitude cometh (was coming) unto him, saith. Matthew (xiv. 14), Mark (vi. 34), and Luke (ix. 11) show that the miracle which they all, with John, prepare to describe was preceded by a day in which the Lord instructed the multitudes, "had compassion upon them," "taught them many things," "spoke to them concerning the kingdom of God," "healed their sick." The first approach of the multitude was the occasion of a suggestion which Jesus made to Philip. The other evangelists record the reopening of the conversation on the same theme, stimulated by the question already put to Philip in the forenoon, and on this occasion originated by the disciples. The company arrived by the head of the lake (cf. Mark vi. 33, "They ran afoot out of all the cities"); and the first compassionate thought is attributed by

John to the Lord himself: Whence are we to buy<sup>1</sup> (bread) loaves, that these multitudes may eat? This very question shows the intimate relations between our Lord and his disciples—the touch of nature. The identification of his interests with theirs is in the "we." Why should Philip be selected for the questioning or suggestion? Luthardt argues that it was a part of the needed education of that apostle that he should have been submitted to the searching anxiety. It is indeed added—

Ver. 6.—This he said to test him; but it is doubtful whether more is involved than an endeavour to entice from Philip the answer of faith, such *e.g.* as "Lord, all things are possible to thee." Philip of Bethsaida was, moreover, in all probability, present at the wedding-feast at Cana, and might have anticipated some such sign of the resources of his Lord. The other hints of Philip's character are severally consistent with this. Philip had said in the first instance to Nathanael, "Come and see." "Seeing is believing;" and Philip, on the night of the Passion, after much hearing and seeing of Jesus, said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us;" for he had even then not risen to the loftiness of the perception that the Father had been and was being revealed in Christ's own life (ch. xiv.). Philip's personal acquaintance with the immediate vicinity is more likely to be the reason of his being put to this proof; while the tact of the inquiry as addressed to him is an undesigned note of the identity of the Johannine Christ with that portrayed by the synoptists. Bengel's suggestion, that Philip was entrusted with the commissariat of the twelve, is hardly consistent with the fact that Judas kept the common purse. We are expressly told that Jesus did not put the question in consequence of any deficiency of knowledge or resources on his own part, but to test the character and tone of Philip's mind. He himself knew what he was about to do. Thus, by a slight touch, we see the blending of the distinctly human with the consciously Divine elements of that unique personality of his. There were to his Divine consciousness no gaps of reality, but he so threw himself into human conditions that he could ask the question and pass through the experience of a man. The whole *kenotic* controversy is, of course, involved in the solution of the problem offered

<sup>1</sup> Ἀγοράζωμεν is preferred by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T. and on very abundant authority, in place of ἀγοράζουσιν of T.R., which has only three later uncials, K, U, V, and some manuscripts of the Italic Versions and a few Fathers to sanction it.

by this verse. Perhaps no greater difficulty is involved in imagining the union of the Divine and human in one personality, in which at times the Ego is the Son of God and at other times purely the Son of man, than there is in the blending of the flesh and spirit in the Divine life of our own experience. John saw this, felt this, when the question was addressed to Philip. He saw by intuitive glance, as on so many other occasions, what Christ "knew" absolutely (*ᾔδει*) or came to know by experience and observation (ch. iv. 1; xvi. 19). The "trial," not the "temptation," of Philip was obvious in the form and tone of the question. The use of the word *πειράζων* shows that it frequently means "test," "prove," as well as "tempt." If God tempts, it is with the beneficent intention of encouraging the tempted one to succeed, to resist the allurements, to show and prove his power to bear a more serious assault. If the devil tempts (*πειράζει*), it is with the hope of inducing the sufferer to yield and fail.

Ver. 7.—Philip took a calculating method of meeting the difficulty, and looked at the question as one which their entire resources were unable to solve. He did not so much as think of the "whence," or from what quarter the loaves could be procured, as how much money would be required to meet the case. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of loaves are not sufficient for them, that each one<sup>1</sup> may take a little. The *denarius* was equal to about eightpence halfpenny of our money; so that the sum spoken of, probably representing the entire contents of their common purse, was only six pounds fifteen shillings, and was utterly insufficient for the purpose. The conversation preserved by Mark (vi. 35—37) cannot well be made part of this language of Philip, but rather follows when the short afternoon was coming on, and the long shadows indicated the near approach of darkness. Philip had told the other disciples of the Lord's question, and they had discussed the possible perils of the case and the intentions of the Lord. It is interesting to see, in Mark, that the same sum was mentioned as being insufficient for the needs of the great multitudes. John has not only abridged the narrative of the synoptists, but added a feature which is of interest, and shows how for some hours the disciples had meditated on what they fancied would be necessary, and had come to the somewhat unwelcome conclusion that they must sacrifice their entire stock of funds. The Lord had first of all made the

suggestion. They now go to him, to beseech his influence to send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and *buy themselves something to eat*. When the enigmatic words burst from his lips, "Give ye them to eat," the two hundred pennyworth of bread is once more referred to by the disciples as insufficient (Luke ix. 12, 13; Matt. xiv. 15—17).

Vers. 8, 9.—Then saith one of his disciples to him, viz. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. The spokesman is here specially indicated. On other occasions Andrew is singled out as the brother of Simon and friend of Philip (ch. i. 41; xii. 22). This repeated reference to the illustrious brother of Simon is a refutation of the ill-natured charge against the author of the Gospel, that he aimed at the depreciation of the character of the great apostle. Moreover, it is interesting to remember that in the *Muratorian* fragment on the Canon, "Andrew" is specially mentioned as being one of those present with John in Ephesus, who urged him to write his Gospel (see Introduction, IV. 2(3)). There is a<sup>1</sup> lad here (possibly a lad who was brought with themselves, or who had attached himself to the twelve) who has five barley loaves, the bread of the poorest classes. Of this there is ample proof ('Sotah,' ii. 1, quoted by Edersheim, vol. i. 681): "While all other meat offerings were of wheat, that brought by the woman accused of adultery was to be of *barley*, because, as her deed is that of the animals, so her offering is of the food of animals." If this lad was conveying the food-stock of the Lord and his apostles, it is an impressive but accidental hint that "for our sakes he became poor," and classed himself socially with the humblest. And two fishes. The use of this word is peculiar to our Gospel (Luke, *ἰχθύες*; Mark, *ἰχθῆας*, the ordinary word for "fish;" but John uses the word *ὀψάρια*, the diminutive of the Greek word *ὄψον*, which means "savoury," eaten with bread). This *opsarion* mostly consisted of small fishes caught in the lake, which were dried, salted as "sardines" or "anchovies" are with ourselves for a similar purpose. This habit belonged locally to the neighbourhood of the lake, and reveals the Galilaean origin or associations of the writer. The Aramaic word, *ophsonim*, is derived from the Greek *opson*, and that of *aphjain*, or *aphiz*, is the name for a small fish caught in the lake, the drying of which was a lucrative source of industry. Eder-

<sup>1</sup> T.R. here adds *ἀνὴρ*; it is omitted by N, A, B, L, Π, etc., by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, etc.

<sup>1</sup> T.R. reads here *ἓν*, "one," with the authority of A, Γ, Δ, and many other uncials; but N, B, D, 1, 69, fifteen manuscripts, and many others, omit it (so Tischendorf, 8th edit., Westcott and Hort, R.T., and Trevelles).

sheim reminds us that the fish laid on the charcoal fire (ch. xxi. 9, 10, 13) was "oparion," and that of this the risen Lord, on the shore of this very lake, gave to his disciples to eat, though he guided them at that time to a shoal of *great fishes*, *ἰχθύων μεγάλων*, and bade them add some of these to the *ὑψάρια*, which he was content to use still. The use of this word on these two occasions shows that, at the last, our Lord reminds his disciples of the miraculous feeding by the shore of the lake; and both narratives breathe the air of the northern parts of Galilee. But what are these among so many? The same lesson of the insufficiency of human resources to meet great human needs is suggested by Numb. xi. 21—23. Our resources at the very best are quite exhausted. Our best, our all, avails little—an expression which would apply to the numberless offers of our poor humanity and of our limited faculties to meet the moral starvation of the world. Take the Old Testament: how can the dispensation of all its provision satisfy *per se* the need of mankind as a whole? Greek philosophy, even if it satisfy the few, the leisurely, the cynical, the learned, the wise men of the West, what will it do for the poor, the broken-hearted, the consciously guilty? The good things of this life are equally powerless, and the proposals of even truth itself, apart from the gracious operations of the Spirit, would fail to meet the wants or necessities of the unbelieving.

Ver. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Jesus said (the omission of *δὲ* rather augments the vivid force of the statement). Make the people (*ἀνθρώπους* here, contrasted with the *ἄνδρες* of the next clause) recline. Now there was much grass in the place. As already said, this is in harmony with the note of time conveyed in ver. 4. The other evangelist (Mark vi. 39) speaks of the people sitting down "upon the green grass"—a vivid touch this of an eye-witness; Matthew (xiv. 19) also speaks of the grass; and Mark and Luke add another memorable feature which John omits. The men (*ἄνδρες* were distinguished from *ἄνθρωποι*, which last term may have included the "women and children" (Matt. xiv. 21), who in no great numbers probably formed, according to Eastern custom, a company by themselves). The men sat down (reclined), in number—the matter of the "number" is here put into the "accusative of closer definition" (Meyer)—about five thousand.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Δὲ* is omitted by N, B, L, Syriac, and by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T.

<sup>2</sup> The Sinaitic manuscript (N) here reads, *τόπος πολὺς*, instead of *χόρτος πολὺς*, and *τρισχίλιοι* instead of *πεντακισχίλιοι*.

Luke says, "in groups of fifty." Mark first declares that Jesus ordered them to sit down (*συμπόσια συμπόσια*) in parties, and describes the result as having the appearance of garden-beds (*πρασιαί, πρασιαί*), of fifty or of a hundred each. The *πρασιά* is *area, forum* (Gartenbett; Homer, 'Od.,' vii. 127; xxiv. 247). "*Πρασιαί*," says Theophylact, "are the different divisions in gardens, in which different herbs are often planted." The image of the garden-plots, with different divisions between them, forced itself on the eye-witness (see Trench, 'Miracles,' p. 205).

Ver. 11.—Jesus then took the loaves; and having given thanks (*εὐχαριστήσας* is used by John, whereas Mark speaks of his looking up to heaven and blessing the loaves, uttering words of praise. The Eucharistical expression corresponds with the function of the head of a household at the Paschal feast, and is another hint of relation between the Passover and the discourse which here follows) he distributed<sup>1</sup> to them who were set down. This is not incompatible with the language of the synoptists, that he gave to the disciples, they to the multitude, an undoubted allegory of the method in which all his greatest gifts have been diffused over the world; but John calls special attention to the part, the supreme part, taken in this proceeding by the Lord himself. Advantage has been taken of this to show that the narrative is a glorification of the Eucharistical meal, at which Jesus gave to his disciples the bread which he brake. Likewise also of the fishes (*ὀψαρίων*) as much as they wished. This is, doubtless, the place or moment when the mighty miracle occurred.

"'Twas seed-time when he blessed the bread,

'Twas harvest when he brake."

This pretty couplet, with Augustine's and Olshausen's remarks that the processes of nature were hastened by the great organ of the Divine Creator, does not throw any light upon the phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> It makes it more

<sup>1</sup> The T.R. here introduces, on the authority of N, D, Γ, Δ, with others, *τοὺς μαθηταίς, οἱ δὲ μαθηταί*—a probable introduction from the account of Matthew (N\*, A, B, L, H, 1, 33, 118\*, 254, numerous manuscripts of Italic Version, and Vulgate and other versions; Origen, Basil, etc.). The clause is omitted by R.T., Tregelles, and Tischendorf (8th edit.).

<sup>2</sup> Augustine ('Serm.,' 130, 131) contrasted the daily augmentation of seed in the furrows with this multiplication of seed in the hands of Jesus; and 'In Evang. Joh. Tract.,' xxiv., he repeated the idea in felicitous form (see Trench, *loc.*, 208).

inexplicable, for ground corn and baked barley loaves afford no parallel with living seeds, and dead and salted fish create even greater difficulties. "Frugality exaggerated into a miracle" (Renan) is far more thinkable, though it leaves the sequel unexplained. We must either reject the narrative, notwithstanding its wonderful confirmation by two or three separate eye-witnesses, or we must accept it. If we do the latter, we see in this (and the following) miracle an assertion that the creative will of Christ is the sole cause of the additional food that was provided for the sustenance of this multitude. The Son of God added to the sum of things, to the quantity of matter, or called together from surrounding air the elements needed for the purpose, just as in hushing the storm he met force by that will of his which is the ultimate source and ground of all force. He spake in the power of Heaven, and it was done. *He gave thanks, and he distributed.*

Ver. 12.—Then when they were filled, he said to his disciples. Gather together the broken pieces—not the crumbs left on the ground by the satisfied thousands, but the pieces broken from the original loaves (see each of the synoptists, who refer to the breaking, by Jesus, of the loaves)—that remain over—not eaten by the multitudes; the superabundance of the provision is a witness to the affluence of the Giver and the reality of the gift—that nothing be lost. This sacred economy of Jesus is in harmony with and illustrative of the ways of the Creator with His universe, and of the wisdom recommended to his disciples. The other evangelists describe the facts, but do not attribute the order to the wise words of the Lord himself. Paulus, in the endeavour to make this statement confirm his rationalistic interpretation, makes sad havoc of the grammar, and, instead of translating—

Ver. 13.—Therefore they gathered together, and filled twelve baskets with the broken pieces of the five barley loaves which remained over to them that had eaten, says, "For (ὅν) they gathered together, and had filled [ἐγέμισαν, first aorist, not pluperfect] twelve baskets with the fragments [the more than enough food that had been gathered and prepared for eating] of the five loaves;" and he makes John here speak, not of remnants left *after* the meal, but of bread broken *before* the meal. Such a treatment of the text cannot be justified on any pretext. The twelve baskets full (δώδεκα κοφίνους) are interesting in two ways. The number "twelve" naturally suggests that each one of the twelve apostles had been employed in the collection of the fragments. There is no need, with Luthardt, to imagine an unconscious re-

ference to the twelve tribes of Israel, further than that the twelve apostles themselves were at first chosen with that reference. The number twelve points to the fact that the apostles had already been selected, though this Gospel is silent about that fact. Again, the word used for "basket" is that which is used in the three synoptic narratives, and contrasts with the σπρίδες, the word used in the later account of the feeding of the four thousand. It means the ordinary wallet, or *corbis*, in which Jews, on the march, were accustomed to carry their food. In Matt. xvi. 8-12, where the two miracles are compared with each other, the two words are again used. The "fragments," the superabundance of provision of love for all mankind, was an idea specially conveyed by our Lord as antithetic to the monopolizing doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees. It is unsatisfactory to suppose that the author of this Gospel manipulated the story as given in Mark, adapting it to his own purpose. John's narrative is full of fresh life, though not so pictorial as that of the Second Gospel. The incident of Philip and Andrew is calculated to throw much light upon the event without conflicting with the synoptists. The mythical hypothesis suggests that we have here a Messianic reproduction of the story of Elijah and the cruse of oil (1 Kings xvii. 16), or the augmentation of the oil by Elisha (2 Kings iv. 1-7), and still more the feeding by Elisha of a hundred men with twenty loaves of bread and fresh ears of corn (2 Kings iv. 42-44). The suggestion simply shows that there were anticipations in the prophetic career of the great prophets of the northern kingdom of that which the greater than Elijah accomplished in vindication of his own mission.

Ver. 14.—The people (ἄνθρωποι) therefore, when they saw the sign which he wrought—when they witnessed the marvel, admitted that it was a testimony to what was special and authoritative in the great Healer and Life-giver, a "sign" of his higher nature—said, This is verily the Prophet that is coming into the world. This was probably in reference to the great prediction (Deut. xviii. 18) to which such frequent and solemn reference was made. From ch. i. 21, 25,

<sup>1</sup> N, B, D, Italic Versions, Syriac (Curetonian), Tischendorf (8th edit.), Godet, Tregelles, and R.T., omit ὁ Ἰησοῦς; while T.R., Lachmann, with A, L, Γ, Δ, and many uncials and versions, retain it. Westcott and Hort prefer to read, & ἐποίησεν σημεῖα, placing the singular in the margin. Tischendorf (8th edit.) gives the singular in the text, with N, A, D, L, all the Syriac Versions, and other authorities

we learn that the Sanhedrists distinguished between "the Christ," "the Elijah," and "that Prophet;" but these verses show how the two ideas were blended in the minds of the people. As Jesus fulfilled one or more of the predictions of the Old Testament, and embodied the foreshadowings of his entire career which were given in the temple and the sabbath, in the ritual and the priest, in the prophet and the king, it was gradually revealed to the world that in him all fulness dwelt. At all events, just as in the case of Nathanael, the prophetic gifts of Jesus suggested to the guileless man that he was King of Israel, so here we find a similar connection of ideas.

Vers. 15.—Jesus therefore knowing (having found, perceived (*γινούς*), by ominous movements in the crowd, or in any other way still more explicit) that they were about to come and by violence, or force, seize him in order that they might make him King. This movement was not an unnatural one. They were on the way to Jerusalem, and they were thirsting to throw off the yoke of Rome and of Herod, and probably indignant to the extreme with the "deep damnation" of John the Baptist's death. In such a frame, the display of power and resources which they had just witnessed pointed Jesus out as their popular idol, and encouraged the belief, which did not die out till it was quenched in blood. The bald suggestion would clash absolutely with the Lord's own plan, with the Father's design concerning him. It would seem that the disciples manifested great reluctance to leave Christ or the crowd; for both Matthew (xiv. 22) and Mark (vi. 45) imply that Jesus had to use special means to induce them to depart (*ἠνάγκασεν*). He compelled them to do so. If we had nothing but the synoptic narrative to guide us, we might suppose that Jesus had difficulty in resisting the desire of the disciples to remain always at his side; or that the intensity of their affection was interfering too much with the need in which he felt of retirement and solitude. John's statement here illumines the language of the other Gospels. The disciples themselves were strongly moved by the passions of the thousands; they were sharing in the general enthusiasm. To quench such an unholy or unspiritual view of the true Prophet and King, the disciples must be separated from the crowd, and Christ had to overcome by some special utterance of his authority the reluctance of the twelve to embark in their ship. Having done this, and without their help, he sent the multitudes away. He withdrew, for the second

time, to the mountain (cf. ver. 3), and this time himself alone. These occasional separations from the apostles were undoubtedly part of the discipline to which they were subjected. They were taught that, when he was no longer visible to them, he might still be spiritually present and able to succour them.

Vers. 16—21.—(2) *The mastery of the forces of nature—a "sign" of love.*

Vers. 16, 17.—Now when it became evening. This must have been the "second evening;" for the miracle itself was said to be wrought when the day began to decline (Matt. xiv. 15; Luke ix. 12). The first evening (*ὀψία*) lasted from three to six p.m., the "second evening" stretched from sundown to darkness (*σκοτία*). The night was drawing on. His disciples went down from the higher ground or grassy slopes to the sea (*ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν*), and having embarked in a ship, they were making for the other side of the sea to Capernaum; or as Mark (vi. 45) says, "towards Bethsaida." This occasions no difficulty to those who remember that there were two Bethsайдas—one, "Bethsaida Julias," on the north-eastern end of the lake; and the other near to Capernaum, called "Bethsaida of Galilee." The two towns were so near that the latter Bethsaida might reasonably be regarded as the port of Capernaum.

Vers. 17, 18.—And darkness had already come on,<sup>1</sup> and Jesus had not yet come to them. This thrilling touch in John's narrative makes it more than evident that the beloved disciple was on board. He had been expecting the Master to make his appearance in some form. He had looked long and eagerly to that point on the mountain-side whither he knew that Jesus had retired. The dreary and disappointed expectation, the long and weary waiting, left an indelible impression. Their natural course towards Capernaum would have been almost parallel with the shore of the lake; but it was dark and tempestuous, they could not steer. And the sea was being roused from its slumber by reason of a high wind which was blowing. If the wind came from the north, it would drift

authority of N<sup>a</sup>, A, B, D, L, and many other uncials; but *φεγγει* is the unusual word adopted by Tischendorf (6th and 8th edit.), on the authority of N<sup>a</sup> alone, and some doubtful quotations, etc.

<sup>1</sup> The R.T., Lachmann, and Westcott and Hort here agree with T.R., *ἥδη ἐγγόνει*, on the authority of A, B, L, Γ, Δ, and many others; but Tischendorf (8th edit.), on the authority of N, D, and one manuscript, and no other, reads, *κατέλαβεν δὲ αὐτοὺς ἡ σκοτία*, "and darkness overtook them."

<sup>1</sup> *Ἀνεχώρησεν* is the reading of T.R., Lachmann, R.T., Westcott and Hort, on the

them out into the darkness and the middle of the lake, which is there, at its widest, about five miles broad, i.e. forty stadia, or furlongs. The statement of the next verse comes then into undesigned coincidence with Mark vi. 47, which shows that they were "in the midst of the sea," i.e. half-way from shore to shore. This would exactly correspond with the following statement.

Ver. 19.—When they had rowed<sup>1</sup> about twenty-five or thirty stadia; or, *furlongs*. When they had rowed with a north-west wind, one "contrary to them," about three miles and a half, they would be in the midst of the broadest portion of the lake, and exposed to the force of those gales which often sweep down with astonishing fury upon lakes similarly guarded on all sides by high hills. While the wind was tossing the little lake into angry waves, it was not silent on the mountain side or summit, and Jesus (says Mark) "saw them toiling in rowing." He loved them to the uttermost. Now, Jesus never went out of his way to work a miracle, but he never went out of his way to avoid one. It seems as natural to him to make his will the cause of events as to submit to the arbitrament of circumstances. The miracle, however, was always for the benefit of others, not for his own advantage and comfort. They beheld Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing near to the ship. Paulus, Gfrörer, and Baumgarten-Crusius suppose that Jesus was walking "along the shore" (*παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν* is the phrase used for this movement in Mark i. 16; not *ἐν τῇ θάλασσῃ*, as here), and that they had miscalculated their distance, and that there was no manifestation of special power on the occasion, nothing less than one of the most ordinary of all coincidences. The three narrators, each in his own manner, convey a profoundly different impression. The discovery of their Lord thus in near proximity would not have made them "cry out for fear," and say (Matthew and Mark), "It is a phantasm," an apparition, a herald of immediate destruction. The loud cry (*ἀνέκραξαν*) is the especial note of Mark. John simply says, They were affrighted (*ἐφοβήθησαν*). They might have eagerly longed for his presence, remembering his recent display of power when "the winds and sea obeyed him." But when the deliverance came, the manner of it was unexpected, and

the symbolism ineffably sublime. They could not have been ignorant of the Psalms which spoke of Jehovah walking on the sea, and mightier than its waves (see also Job ix. 8, "He alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth on the heights of the sea"). This visible nearness to them of the mighty power of God is enough to have startled them into cries of fear; but it is quite incompatible with the rationalistic interpretation of the event. Matthew and Mark both relate that the Lord came to them at or about the fourth watch (i.e. between three and six a.m.), when the first gleams of light were breaking over the eastern hills. Consequently, their peril had been prolonged and perplexing. The whole of the narrative lends itself to symbol, and suggests the impressive analogy of the calamities to which the ship of God's Church has been exposed in its long history. Often has the Church been chastised for its secular tastes and worldly passions, buffeted with the storms of the world and tormented by the waves; but in the direst extremity it has seen the deliverer approach, and at first cried out for fear, trembling at his nearness. Individual believers have often seen, in this picture of the storm and the Saviour, an *image* of the sore travail and victory of their faith. The disposition on the part of numerous expositors to press these analogies has strengthened the hands of the critical and rationalistic expositors. We can grant that the idea which is so fertile is more important than the narrative *per se*, but apart from the historic fact itself, who can say that the idea would ever have dawned on human minds? We make no further attempt to think out the *modus operandi* of the miracle, nor can we with that view accept the *docetic* conception of the body of Christ, which some have attributed most unfairly to John's Gospel. It is enough that the will of Christ thus faced the forces of nature, and prophesied the ultimate victory which the will of glorified humanity will likewise win. The great *ἔργα* of Christ include his power over nature, in its physical elements and forces, in the regions of both animal and vegetable life, over human nature, diseased, crippled, devil-ridden, and dead. The highest realm over which he reigned was his own Divine-human Person, as recorded (1) *in this event*, (2) in his transfiguration, (3) in his resurrection and ascension.

Ver. 20.—But he saith to them, **It is I** (literally, *I am*); be not afraid. These Divine words, in a voice which reminded them of his entire personality, of all his previous beneficence, of all his knowledge of their weakness and fear, are sacredly symbolic. The Church has ever since regarded them as veritably

<sup>1</sup> Ἐλαύνειν, used in Mark vi. 48 and here, commonly means "to drive," and is used of ships or clouds driven by the wind (Jas. iii. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 17); but from Homer downwards it is, with *ῥῆα* or *ῥαῖν*, used for "rowing."

sacramental. In the darkest hour of men and Churches, in the throes of persecution, in the furnace of temptation, on a million death-beds, the same voice has been heard. His Divine Personality, his infinite power and perfect sympathy, the conviction of his specialized regard and veritable nearness (as we count nearness), have scattered doubt and fear.

Ver. 21.—Then they were willing to receive him into the ship: and straightway the ship was at the land whither they were going. Some expositors, who find discrepancy between this statement and that of the synoptists, say, "they were willing, but did not do it," because the vessel is said by some remarkable process to have been miraculously propelled to the shore (so Lücke, Meyer). There are many passages, however, where a similar expression is used, and where no doubt arises that that which the actors were willing to do they actually did (see Mark xii. 38; certainly scribes were not only willing to, but actually did, wear long robes). Chrysostom felt this difficulty, and actually proposed to read *ἤλθον* instead of *ἠθέλον*, which would remove the difficulty; and it veritably contains this reading, but it has every appearance of an unauthorized correction. The imperfect tense implies a lengthened willingness supervening on fear and outcry—a willingness or wish increased by the sound of his voice, following his first action, his apparent resolve to pass by them; and, still more, by the incident described in Matthew's Gospel, of Peter's desire to display the strength of his faith and the eminence of his position among the twelve. This occupied time, during which the wind may have been bearing them briskly in their true direction. They willed, wished, to take him into the ship, and did so, and the calm supervened as described in Matthew and Mark. Their wish is not frustrated by the fact now mentioned, but accompanied by it. "Straightway," etc. Most expositors confess this to be an additional miracle, that the twenty furlongs or thereabouts (two miles and a half) were suddenly traversed and miraculously abolished. There would be a greater miracle in this than in the two events which preceded. The annihilation of space and time is the obliteration of the very categories of thought, and would, if conveyed by the statement, suggest a *stupendous* and, so far as we can see, a useless portent. It would strongly tempt us to accept the rationalistic interpretation. *Ebdēws* does not always mean "instantaneously," but simply that the next thing to notice or observe was the fact described. Take Mark i. 21, 29. It does not mean that any miraculous rapidity characterized the movement of Christ to the house of Simon and Andrew (Mark iv. 17; Gal. i.

16; 3 John 14; ch. xiii. 32; and many other passages). The author of the 'Christian Year' has consecrated in sweet lines the supposed addition to the miracle—

"Thou Framer of the light and dark,  
Steer through the tempest thine own ark;  
Amid the howling wintry sea,  
We are in port, if we have thee."

But there are so many ways in which this "straightway" may be reconciled with an ordinary disembarkation, that there is no necessity to regard it as implied in John's narrative. John so often leaves gaps unfilled in his chronology and horology that no great emphasis need be laid upon the annihilation (save in his adoring thought) of the hour before the dawn.

Vers. 22—59.—(3) *The sequel of the signs.*

The discussion which follows is closely linked with these two great miracles of power and love. It naturally arises out of them, and refers with great explicitness to the former of them and to its true meaning. The discussion does unquestionably alter its scope as it proceeds, and at vers. 41 and 52 "the Jews" take up a controversy which had previously been conducted by a portion of the crowd who witnessed his mighty works. Jesus declared (1) that he is himself the Bread of God—the Bread of life for a starving world; then (2) that his "flesh," i.e. his wondrous *humanity*—the veritable abode of the Word of God—will constitute the food of man; (3) that the death of the Divine humanity, the separation of his blood and flesh, must be appropriated by men; (4) that only by this acceptance and entire assimilation—not only of his mission, but of his incarnation; not only of his incarnation, but of his sacrificial death—will men receive him, or live because he lives.

Before the evangelist proceeds to relate this great discourse, he portrays the historical platform, the audience to which it is addressed, and this in a sentence which is unusually involved and perplexed in its construction. The first clause with its verb, *εἶδον*, is not completed until two or three parenthetical ideas are introduced; and then in ver. 24 the sentence is taken up or recommenced, after which the main affirmation follows, viz. *ἐπέβησαν*, etc. The whole sentence is intended to explain the regathering of the crowd on the sea-shore at Capernaum,



and that excited state of baulked curiosity with which they encountered the Lord.

Vers. 22—24.—The next day, the crowd which stood on the other side of the sea, near the site of the great miracle, amazed at the departure of the disciples and the separation between them and Jesus, and saw that there was only one little boat there<sup>1</sup>—or “none other little boat there save one,” and this was too small for it to be the boat which brought Jesus and his disciples thither or took the latter away—and saw that Jesus did not enter with his disciples into the boat in which they were accustomed to move about the lake, but that his disciples departed alone (Howbeit<sup>2</sup> there came boats from Tiberias, the principal station on the lake, the boatmen hoping to secure numerous ferry-freights, near to the place where they did eat bread after that the Lord had given thanks, associating the marvellous gift with the holy thanksgiving of the wondrous Host). He does not say that Tiberias was near to the place where, etc., but that the boats from Tiberias came near to the place, etc. This parenthesis makes it clear that this one little boat was the only one belonging to the desert place, and could not have conveyed Jesus away. When then the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples—the latter had gone and not returned, and Jesus could not be found on the mountain-side or summit or hollows (not until we reach this statement does the writer give the principal verb of the sentence)—they themselves embarked in the little boats, and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus. This does not mean that the entire multitude took shipping. Such an exaggeration, contrary to the nature of even the most extravagant legend, some (Strauss) have tried to foist into the story for the sake of discrediting it. The geographical relation of the two places shows that there were other ways of passing from one spot to the other than by ship. That some should return by the head of the lake, and others should cross its northern arc by boat to Capernaum, reveals a simple and

interesting fact, which is incidentally conveyed by the synoptists, viz. that Capernaum was the customary dwelling-place of our Lord during his Galilean ministry (cf. ch. ii. 12; Matt. iv. 13; viii. 5; and see also Matt. ix. 1; Luke iv. 24).

Ver. 25.—When they had found him on the other side of the sea (other side than that on which the miracle took place, and yet near Capernaum. This contradicts the exposition which would make the site of the feeding to be on the western side), they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou? and how happens it that thou art here? The *πότε ἔδε γέγονας*; is difficult to translate. The *when?* practically includes the *how?* also. The difficulty lay in the time. They were sure that Jesus had not started before the disciples, and they knew that there was no method by which the lake itself would have been available, and they want explanation. The news of his crossing the water after some fashion that would ally him to Moses, Joshua, Elijah, may easily have got disseminated, one report or another being rapidly circulated.

Vers. 26—36.—(a) *An offer of himself as veritable bread.*

Ver. 26.—Jesus answered them; i.e. he met by response their question, but not after the fashion their curiosity might dictate, omitting any reply to their unnecessary inquiry, and even refusing to answer it. The method and time were of no real moment to his questioners. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs—in the sense I am desirous you should see those miracles of healing (ver. 2) or other wonders of yesterday, viz. as “signs,” “symbols,” of my higher nature or of my Divine commission. The first group of healings drew some of you to my side, not for my word, but for more healing; and though some others of you who ate of the bread said (ver. 14), “This is the promised Prophet that is coming into the world,” you did not get beyond the outward seeming, the superficial phenomenon; you revealed by thus rushing to the conclusion that I was your Prophet and King, that you did not really discern the sign I gave, and ye are seeking me now, not because you have really seen “signs”—but because ye ate of the (those) loaves, and were filled up by this temporary supply of your daily want, expecting to-day some new, some more impressive, characteristic of the Messianic kingdom than yesterday. You are fastening on the outward, acting on the mere physical resources which you suppose me to possess. These are not the claims I make on your loyalty or obedience.

Ver. 27.—Labour (work, toil, rush, as you are doing, from Bethsaida Julias to Caper-

<sup>1</sup> The text is also difficult to decide. The T.R., with Γ, Δ, Α, and other later uncials, and cursives, and Curetonian Syriac, read *ἰδὼν ὅτι* instead of *εἰδὼν*, with Α, Β, L, the Italic manuscripts, and other versions. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T. agree to read the latter. The same authorities omit *ἐκείνο εἰς ὃ ἐνέβησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*, which N and D and other manuscripts admit with numerous modifications. In ver. 23 *πλοῖα* is replaced by preponderating authority by *πλοῖα*.

<sup>2</sup> Ἄλλὰ is the reading of R.T., Westcott and Hort; ἄλλα δὲ of T.R., of Tischendorf (8th edit. omits δὲ), Tregelles, Lachmann.

naum, or from either to Jerusalem) not for the food that is perishable, which soon loses its effect and must be renewed, which is corruptible and worthless if not partaken of at once, which, like manna, may breed worms, or vanish in the sun; labour not for the merely outward and vanishing and perishable elements in my work. Christ did not mean that these multitudes were not to toil for their daily bread, which could only be secured for them by labour and the sweat of the brow; but to labour for the food which endureth (or, *abideth*) unto eternal life (this last clause Moulton would separate from the μένουσας, and considers to relate to the principal verb of the sentence; i.e. "labour for the abiding food," *with a view to, or unto, eternal life*). The bread that abideth unto eternal life, however, corresponds very closely with the water of life (ch. iv. 14), which, when once appropriated, flows and springs up with perennial energy within the soul, conferring the consciousness and the beginning of eternal life. There is a food which is imperishable and incorruptible, feeding the heavenly life within the soul, and which, if once assimilated, becomes Divine life itself. Labour for that life which the Son of man will give to you. This grand idea, viz. the gift of eternal life in and by Christ himself, was one of the main themes of the Gospel of John. Christ knew himself to be the Giver of eternal life—a life of perfect blessedness, irrespective of time, and sense, and flesh, and the world, and death. The Lord here calls himself "Son of man," rather than "Son of God." The whole of the subsequent discourse expands and rests upon this gift of the perfect and blessed life in and by his *humanity*. In the previous chapter attention was called to the Divine Sonship and the Divine activity. Here equal emphasis was laid upon the *human* sonship and on the acceptance and assimilation by man of this supreme gift. The power or function of the Son of man to bestow this life is sustained by the assertion, For him (this very one) the Father, even God, hath sealed. Σφραγίζω<sup>1</sup> (see ch. iii. 33) means here to ratify and accredit as worthy and competent to discharge such duties, to render indubi-

table, to confirm by outward visible sign or seal, as one empowered to do so Divine a thing. The Father has made "the Son of man" the steward of his bounty. The Son of man has the key to this boundless treasure, this eternal blessing. Men, however, must labour to receive so great a gift. It will prove to be a gift, even if they put forth the most strenuous energy to receive it. This first dialogue contrasts the carnal and spiritual reasons for seeking Jesus, and brings into sharp relief the Galilæan conception of the Christ, as Miracle-worker, temporal Potentate, prophetic Leader of some vast host of triumphant enthusiasts, and contrasts with it the Lord's own conception of himself as the Giver, the Medium, the divinely appointed Almoner of a spiritual blessing, for which, while the Father-God freely and lavishly gives it, the sons of men must eagerly toil. The next question and answer bring out the moral condition on which alone the gift can be dispensed.

Ver. 28.—They say unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? The works of God might be, either works like those which are wrought by God the Father, but this would be a very improbable demand; or "the works of God" may be those which God has assigned to man as the conditions of his favour. There is a breadth about the question that may cover the ground involved in Christ's declaration, but it reveals, at the same time, the self-complacency, the carnal conception on the part of these Galilæans of their being able, competent, to fulfil along certain lines to be specified, all the required conditions. But we must not be too hard on these Galilæans, brought up as they were to believe in the efficacy of certain rounds of specific and arbitrary duties, methods of purification, forms of service and of abstinence, pilgrimages and fastings and feasting, as well as obedience to a specific moral code. They ask quite rationally, "What must we do?" and in various forms the same question bursts from the heart of all who have, starting from utter indifference, made any progress towards, or in the direction of, holy living or of Divine pleasing.

Ver. 29.—Christ's reply really solves the great problem which had long perplexed the schools of Palestine, and often, and even to the present hour, is dividing into two hostile camps the Christian Church. Jesus answered and said to them, This is the work

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch approves of the suggestion of a Jewish correspondent (*Old Test. Student*, September, 1883) to the effect that one of the methods of sealing was the stamp which the baker impressed upon bread. In the 'Mishna' the baker is called *באקן*, and Delitzsch translates *τοῦτον ἐσφράγισεν*, in his Hebrew translation of the New Testament, by *באקן* (see "Brevia," by editor of *Expositor*, January, 1885). Thus the Father stamps his image on the Son (Heb. i. 3).

<sup>1</sup> Ποιῶμεν (R.T.) is the reading of the principal uncials, and ποιούμεν that of G, with numerous cursives, and was adopted by Stephens. Italic and Vulgate read "faciemus" with ποιήσωμεν (cf. Authorized Version).

of God. Observe, not "works," but "work"—the one work which is the germ and the consummation of all the partial workings which are often made substitutes for it. There is "one work" which God would have man do. Jesus admits that there is something to do (*ποιεῖν*)—there is a labour, an effort of the will needed to do what God requires; and this is evident enough as soon as this great work is described, viz. That ye believe on him whom he (the Father) sent; or, *hath sent*. "*ἵνα πιστεύητε*," here preferred by the R.T. to *πιστεύσῃτε* (see ch. xiii. 19), marks the simple fact and continuous act of believing with the effort tending to such result; while the aorist would have pointed to one definite act of faith (see Westcott). To "believe on him," to habitually entrust one's self to the power and grace of Christ, to make a full moral surrender of the soul to the Lord, includes in itself all other work, and is in itself the great work of God. "It is the Christian answer to the Jewish question" (Thoma). "Faith is the life of works, works the necessity of faith" (Westcott). "Faith is the highest kind of work, for by it man gives himself to God, and a free being can do nothing greater than give himself. St. James opposes work to a faith which would be nothing but intellectual belief. St. Paul opposes faith, active faith, to works of mere observance. The 'faith' of St. Paul is really the 'work' of St. James, according to this sovereign formula of Jesus, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe'" (Godet). Luther says, "To depend on God's Word, so that the heart is not terrified by sin and death, but trusts and believes in God, is a much severer and more difficult thing than the Carthusians or all orders of monks demand." Schleiermacher says, "This is the most significant declaration, that all eternal life proceeds from nothing else than faith in Christ."

Ver. 30.—They said therefore to him, What then doest thou as a sign that we may see and believe thee? There is a kind of irony in the inquiry, "What doest thou?" There is at least some ironical mystification of the words of Jesus, "If we have not seen, as thou sayest, the sign, which we thought sufficient to induce us to hail thee as our Prophet-King, what sign wilt thou give us now? If we are to believe on thee, what sign art thou ready to show now that we may see it, and believe thee, i.e. take thy word as trustworthy, and so begin to

consider whether it will be safe to believe in, to entrust ourselves to, thee?" It has been the peculiarity of the Jewish mind in all ages to seek after a sign, to desire some irresistible reason for invincible faith. In certain stages of immaturity and states of unrest we passionately ask for signs even now—for something more than silent words, for more than past memories, for some voice out of heaven, some gleams of glory, that "we may see and believe." These frames of mind are no whit more reprehensible than the Greek demand for unanswerable argument, for logical harmony, or for sure demonstration. They said to him, What dost thou work? How wilt thou vindicate thy demand for such implicit trust? This very question has been made into a reason for breaking all historic connection between the miracle of the feeding and the dialogue and discourse before us (Grotius, Kuinoel, B. Bauer, Weiss, and Schenkel). It is, however, clear that they were still revolving the work of the past day, which Jesus had depreciated *per se*, and which, apart from the higher lesson it might have conveyed to them, and apart from the wrong conclusion they had been drawing from it, grievously perplexed them, and seemed insufficient to establish the new claim of Jesus. They, too, begin to depreciate it in comparison with a corresponding sign which Moses had wrought for their fathers. Verily if Moses had been the mediator of the portentous sign of the manna, if Moses had been its real author, it was a much greater sign than what they witnessed at Bethsaida. For forty years the miraculous bread had been lavished upon them. Daily and weekly it proved its supernatural character. In quantity, quality, prolongation, and renewal day by day, and in its cessation when they ate the fresh corn of Canaan, they not unnaturally saw something immeasurably more vast and imposing than the offer of a single meal to a little company of five thousand men. Christ had wrought a *répas*, an *ἔργον*, but they had not seen the real *σημεῖον* involved in it. He himself suggested that something entirely different from that meal, and different from their conclusions concerning it was the true "sign." Let him work the same adequate sign. They are not repudiating all knowledge of the feeding of the five thousand, nor revealing their ignorance of it. They are thrown back on their ingrained passion for supernatural proof, not as yet satisfied by what Christ had done.

Ver. 31.—Our fathers, they continued, ate the manna in the wilderness; even as it has been written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat. If Moses did this, the Christ should do more, seeing he makes this exhaustive claim upon our faith. The

<sup>1</sup> *πιστεύητε* rests on the authority of N, A, B, L, T, 1, 33, and other cursives, and is preferred by Tischendorf (8th edit.) and R.T.; *πιστεύσῃτε* (aorist) rests on many uncials and several quotations from Fathers.

manna (see Exod. xvi.; Numb. xi.) appeared like the hoar-frost out of heaven. It was gifted with numerous qualities—perishable if not immediately used, respecting in mysterious way the sabbath sanctity, attending the Israelites through their forty years' wandering, terminating when no longer wanted, utterly unlike, in quantity and quality, to what is the Oriental manna of commerce (Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' art. "Manna"). The psalmists spoke of it (Ps. lxxviii. 24; cv. 40) as virtually coming down out of heaven, as "corn of heaven," as "angels' food." The Targum of Jonathan, Deut. xxxiv. 6, says, "God caused bread to descend from heaven upon the sons of Israel," and a rabbinical commentary on Ecclesiastes, quoted by Lightfoot and Wettstein: "Redemptor prior descendere fecit pro iis manna; sic et Redemptor posterior descendere faciet manna." Consequently, they make the challenge, not as though Jesus had done no sign, but as though he had not done enough to put himself on an equality with Moses.

Ver. 32.—Jesus therefore said to them, with the tones of special emphasis, Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses, of whom you are reasonably thinking with due reverence, who gave<sup>1</sup> you the bread out of heaven. There are two assertions here. There is also an implication, which the hearers of Jesus were called on to make. (1) It was not Moses who gave to your fathers the bread out of heaven, such as the historians, psalmists, and expositors speak of; for such as it was,—a needed food for the body rained on you out of heaven,—it was the gift of God, not of Moses. (2) Moreover, the manna was not the veritable "bread of heaven." There is a richer and more nourishing food than that, which alone deserves to be called Bread from heaven. The "corn of heaven," though God's gift, was not that of which I speak, nay, it was only the shadow and type of that. But my Father is giving you, even now, the veritable bread out of heaven (*ἀληθινόν*); that which fully answers the description of the term—food for your spiritual sustenance, bread which will save your souls alive, which, if assimilated by you, will convey the consciousness and reality of eternal blessedness. The kind of strength which will arise within you when once appropriated, is an eternal possession, an abiding advantage; the satisfaction is not exhausted by a short

interval, it remains for ever. The Son of man is entrusted with power to bestow it. He is sealed and sanctified and sent into the world for this purpose. This bread is veritably from heaven. Moses did not even give, nor was he the almoner even of, the manna. All the giving then was God's work, but he whom God has sent, on whom you have to believe, is a veritable Giver of this true bread from heaven.

Ver. 33.—For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life to the world. It is debated whether the *ὁ καταβαλὼν* is "he who cometh down," or "that (bread) which cometh," etc.—whether in this verse the Lord passes at once to the identification of himself with the bread, or for a moment longer is delaying the announcement, and broadly asserting the qualities of that "bread of God," viz. that whoever and whatever it is, it comes from heaven, and gives life, not merely to the theocratic people, but to the whole world. (The latter is the view of Hengstenberg, Lange, Meyer, Westcott, Moulton; the former translation is partially urged by Godet, who thinks our Lord here spoke amphibologically, meaning both ideas, but by the form of the expression reserving the solution of the problem.) It certainly does not follow that, if he was speaking of himself, the expression *ὁ καταβάς* would have been used, because, in ver. 50, after he has removed all ambiguity, he still uses the present tense, *ὁ καταβαλὼν*. The present tense is that of quality rather than of time. These characteristics of the veritable bread of God must hold good. It must have a heavenly origin, life-giving power, and universality of application to human need. Ch. iii. 16 is here repeated. The whole world is the object of the Divine grace and love. The bread of God must be a Divine gift, mysterious and heavenly in its origin, and must at once demonstrate its vitality, its Source, and its Giver.

Ver. 34.—They said therefore to him, Lord! His hearers have clearly been more impressed than ever with the extraordinary claims of the speaker. They have risen from the "Rabbi" of ver. 26 to "Kyrie," which implies, as the "Kyrie" or "Sir" or "Lord" of ch. iv. 15, some advance in their tone of deference. The request that follows is neither ironical nor sarcastic, nor need it be as carnal in its spirit as the similar language of the woman of Samaria (ch. iv. 15). They have some dim notion of "doing the works of God," and of some heavenly satisfaction given to their earthly wants. It may be that they imagine some material thing coming down out of heaven, more potent and lasting than the historic manna. Lord, evermore—"at all times," "con-

<sup>1</sup> The reading *ἔδωκεν*, with B, D, L, is adopted by Westcott and Hort, Alford, and Tregelles, though Godet rejects it on internal grounds; Westcott and Hort place *δεδωκεν* in margin; Tischendorf adopts it with K, A, Δ, Λ.

tinuously"—give us this bread, of which you speak, and which as Son of man you are able to bestow, which will not be limited in quantity, which will prove to be the elixir of life, the food of the eternal life, and which will satisfy all our hunger, abolish our poverty, make us indifferent to death. A great prayer this, which Christ showed himself not unwilling to answer in his own way.

Ver. 35.—[*But, or then*'] Jesus said to them, now dropping all disguise, and gathering up into one burning word all the previous teaching, which they might have fathomed, but did not. I am the Bread of life; or "that which cometh down out of heaven, the veritable life-eternal-giving Bread, which I, as the steward of the Divine bounty, am giving, is my very self, my Divine humanity." On other occasions the Lord said, "I am the Light of the world" (ch. viii. 12), "I am the good Shepherd" (ch. x. 14), "I am the Resurrection and the Life" (ch. xi. 25), "I am the veritable Vine" (ch. xv. 1). He claims here to be giving himself to the world, as the Source of its true life. The mode in which any human being can so assimilate this Bread that it should accomplish its purposes and transform itself into life, is by "coming" or "believing." The two terms are parallel, though in "coming" there is more emphasis laid on the distinct act of the will than in "believing." The process is very impressively conveyed. He who has started to come, he that is coming to me, shall by no means hunger; he that is believing on me—endeavouring to effect such inward approval and surrender—shall never thirst (the *πάντες* responds here to the *πάντες*). There is no special significance in the twofoldness of the parallel. "Coming" does not stand in any more immediate relation to "eating" than to "drinking," to the satisfaction of hunger than to that of thirst, nor does "believing" connote exclusively either the one or the other. The parallelism is a strengthening of the same idea. Approach to himself, believing surrender to the reality of his word, will satisfy the most pressing spiritual need, and do it in such a way that the hunger and thirst shall not, shall never, return. There is an invincible and unalterable assent produced

by a real apprehension of Christ, which cannot be shaken out of the soul. Satisfaction of hunger may possibly (as Godet suggests) point to the supply of strength, and the appeasing of thirst to the supply of peace. The deeper idea is that the desire of the soul is satisfied, and it is not a recurrent desire. There are certain realities which, if once perceived, can never be unknown afterwards. There are consolations which, if once supplied, absolutely stanch and heal the wounds of the soul. Christ, in "coming down from heaven," by revealing the Divine Sonship in a Son of man, brings all heaven with him, opens all the Father's heart. To come to him and to believe on him is to feed on the corn of heaven and drink of that river of life, clear as crystal, which is ever issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Ver. 36.—But (ἀλλὰ) is here decidedly adversative. It introduces the melancholy statement, that the one thing which is requisite to the full realization of the gift is that of which these questioners are ignorant) I told you—I said unto you—that you have both seen me, and believe me not; or "that you have seen me, and yet believe not." Some difficulty has arisen from our not being able to find, in the previous dialogue, the exact words here quoted. Some have supposed it to refer to an unrecorded conversation (Alford, Westcott), or even to some written sentence which is now a lost fragment of the discourse. Meyer says (without answering the suggestions of Olshausen, Hengstenberg, Godet, and others), that there is no such statement in the context, and proposes to translate *εἶπον* (as he says it is not unfrequently found in Greek tragedians, as if it were equivalent to *dictum velim*) "I would have you told;" but there is no such usage in the New Testament, and ch. xi. 42 does not seem a parallel case. It is not at all probable that Jesus was referring to the language of ch. v. 37, words which were addressed to a different audience—to "Jews" at Jerusalem, and uttered many months before (Lücke and De Wette). But ver. 26 shows that Galileans had come to see him, and had come without belief in the great sign of his spiritual nature and claims which he had already granted. They had seen him and his great miracles, it is true; but they simply longed in consequence for "more bread" and "more healing," not for himself. In ver. 30 he draws from them a confession that they had not seen enough to believe him. This thought recurs not infrequently. "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed" (ch. xx. 29). The setting forth of himself ought to have induced belief apart

<sup>1</sup> The *ὅν* is found in N, D, F, 13, 33, and other cursives, and is preserved by Tischendorf (8th edit.); δὲ is read by A, Δ, Λ, and nine other uncials, Syriac, Gothic, Ethiopic, and is preferred by Godet and T.R. Tregelles, R.T., Tischendorf (6th edit.), Westcott and Hort, omit the copula, with B, L, T, 113, and some versions, Syriac (Curetonian).

even from works. He is so intensely conscious of the Divine reality himself, that he marvels at the unbelief of his hearers. Let them think as he does, and immediately the lifelong hunger and thirst of their souls would be satisfied. Seeing, however, is not believing in their case; and he has already urged them to consider this lamentable spiritual blindness of theirs. The exclamation of this verse recites the obvious inference of the verses we have referred to, condenses into a sentence the spirit of what he had said, *ἐπεὶ* (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 8).

Vers. 37-40.—(b) *Episode on the blessedness of those who "come" to Christ.*

Ver. 37.—Many suppose a time of stillness, a break in the conversation, "a significant *asyndeton*," from the absence of all connection between this and the previous verse. Vers. 39, 40 would seem to have been addressed more directly to the disciples, the less susceptible hearers retiring from him or engaging in eager conversation (cf. ver. 41). Nevertheless, the Lord takes up the continuous line of his self-revelation, and ver. 37 clearly refers the "non-coming" and "non-believing" in their case to their moral obliquity, and to the apparent inadequacy of sufficient proof to induce the faith which will satisfy spiritual hunger. This spiritual dulness on the part of all suggests some internal and necessary condition, which is, though yet absent, not said to be inaccessible. Seeing ought to issue in believing, but it does not; therefore there is something more than the manifestation of the Christ absolutely necessary. To that Jesus now reverts. *All* (*ᾧ*), the neuter is also used of persons in ch. iii. 6 and xvii. 2, used concerning the whole body of real believers, the whole mass of those who, when they see, do come—the entire company of believers regarded as a grand unity, and stretching out into the future) all that which the Father giveth me. The subsequent descriptions of the Father's grace (vers. 44, 45) throw light on this. The "drawing of the Father," the "hearing and learning from the Father," are there declared to be conditions of "coming to Christ." All those influences on the soul, all the new-creating and spirit-quickening energies of the Holy Ghost, the new heart and tender conscience, the honest, serious desire for holy things, are broadly described in this passage as God's method and act of giving to the Son of his love. There is no necessity (with Augustine) to suppose that our Lord refers to an absolute predestinating decree. For if God has not yet given these particular men to him, it does not say that he will not and may not do so yet. The Father's giving to the Son may indeed assume many forms. It may take the character of original constitution, of predisposition and tempera-

ment, or of special providential education and training, or of tenderness of conscience, or of a truthful and sincere and unquenched desire. The Father is the Divine Cause. "The giving" implies a present activity of grace, not a foregone conclusion. All that which the Father giveth me shall reach me—all souls touched by the Father in a thousand ways to the point of making a moral surrender to my claims, will reach me<sup>1</sup>—and him that is coming to me—i.e. is on the way to me, is drawing near to me—I for my part will not east out. Thus authority to refuse is claimed by Christ, and power to exclude from his fellowship and friendship, from his kingdom and glory (Matt. viii. 12; xxii. 13). Admission is not the working of some impersonal law, but the individual response of him who has come down to give life. As far as man is concerned, it turns on his voluntary coming, on his bare willingness to be fed with heavenly food. It is impossible, so far as responsibility is concerned, to get back of personal wish and individual will. The process of genuine coming to Christ does show that the Father is therein giving such soul to his Son. Archdeacon Watkins says, "Men have now seized one and now the other of these truths, and have built upon them in separation logical systems of doctrine which are but half-truths. He (Jesus) states them in union. Their reconciliation transcends human reason, but is within the experience of human life." The greatness of the self-consciousness of Christ appears in the further proof that he proceeds to supply of this relation to the Father.

Ver. 38.—Because I came down from heaven (cf. ch. iii. 13), not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me (see ch. v. 19, 30, notes). The practical, ethical force of this statement is to shape and defend the previous assurance. Christ's gracious reception and benediction is in willing harmony with, and not in opposition to, the Father's heart. There is no schism between the Father and Son. A separate will in and of itself assigned to the Son is not inconceivable, nay, it is imperatively necessary to posit, or we should lose all distinctions whatever between the Father and Son, between God and Christ. But the very separateness of the wills gives the greater significance to their moral oneness. "Not my will, but thine be done," "Not as I will, but as thou wilt," involve submission, voluntary surrender, to the Father's will; but here the Lord insists on absolute harmony and free co-operation. The bare idea of the Incarnation suggests

<sup>1</sup> The *ἵκεῖ* does mean more than *ἐλθεῖν*: *ἵκω*, equivalent to *adsum, adventio*; therefore more than *venio* (ch. viii. 42; 1 John v. 20).

the conditions of freedom which might conceivably issue in divarication of interest and aim. Christ declares that the Divine commission of his humanity is the spontaneous and free, but perfect, coincidence of his will with the Father's. Christ's embodiment of the Father's will, and co-ordination with it, make all his attractiveness to the human soul. His healing, feeding, and satisfying powers become a revelation of the Father's heart. If he will not cast out the coming ones, it is because he came down out of<sup>1</sup> heaven to fulfil the Father's will (see further, vers. 44, 45), to explain the world-wide hunger, to meet and execute the will of the Father. The frequent assertions by our Lord in this discourse (and in ch. iii. 13) of his descent from heaven as One charged with a full knowledge of the Divine will, implies that the Lord was conscious of pre-existence in the very bosom of God. This was language which, with more of the same import, led St. John to the overwhelming conclusion that the Jesus whom he knew in the flesh was the Only Begotten of the Father—was the Logos made flesh.

Ver. 39.—And this is the will of him<sup>2</sup> (the Father) that sent me (with reference to) all that he hath given me<sup>3</sup> I should not lose (*sc. ri*) anything, any fragment of it; *i.e.* from the entire mass of humanity thus given to me as the guerdon of my sacrificial work, given by the inward working of Divine grace which issues in their coming and reaching *me*, no solitary soul should be plucked out of my hand—should be let slip away into perdition or destruction. The claim of a Divine authority and absolute power could not be put more strongly. The care with which the Divine hand can protect every fragment of his universe, and hold it by its everlasting laws and keep it in the career assigned to it from the beginning, illumines this passage. Should the speaker not sustain this stupendous assumption, it is only too certain that he was giving utterance to the most reckless raving. These words cannot be honestly watered down to the language of the influence of an ethical

reformer or prophetic messenger. Jesus proceeds to clinch his argument and reassert his claims as follows. But in proof of the very opposite of the supposition that I can drop one atom of this great charge, I will raise it up at the last day. Reuss applies this to the resurrection of each believer on the "last day" of each life, for he seems unwilling to find in the Fourth Gospel any such idea as that of the general resurrection. But cf. ch. v. 29, and observe the repetition as in a wondrous refrain, vers. 40, 44, 54, in which he again speaks of the "last day"—the final consummation of his redemptive work. The next verse shows that the Lord did discriminate between eternal life already bestowed here and now, and the great consequence of such possession in the complete restoration of body as well as life. It is in the continuity and perpetuity of the eternal life that we find the condition of the resurrection-life. The "when" of this "last day" is not positively asserted here.

Ver. 40.—For<sup>1</sup> this is the will of my Father<sup>2</sup> (or, of him that sent me), that every one (*πᾶς*, instead of the *πᾶν* of vers. 37, 39), treated separately and individually, who beholdeth—*i.e.* steadily and continuously contemplates—the Son (here he identifies himself with the revelation of the sonship in his own Person) and believeth on him—*i.e.* entrusts himself in a full moral surrender to the Son (the *εἰς αὐτόν* must be here especially noticed) as thus revealed—should have eternal life. This is the sublime law of Divine arrangement, and the fullest expression of the will of the Father (comp. 1 John v. 12, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life"). "Behold and trust." These are the conditions. The steady gaze, the full perception of the Divine Sonship that is adequately expressed in the Son of man, issues by a Divine arrangement in life eternal. The blessedness of the life of faith, its elevation above the conditions of corruption and decay, are not all which he promises, for he added, And (perhaps the *ἵνα* is carried on to the *ἀναστήσω*, and so the word is in subj. aor. rather than fut. indic., and, if so, the sentence may express the fact) that I should raise him (not "it;" cf. ver. 39) at the last day.

It is not improbable, as we have seen, that

<sup>1</sup> Ἀπό is here read by Tregelles, R.T., and Tischendorf (8th edit.), A, B, L, T, 13, 33, etc.; while the more common ἐκ is read by N, D, Γ, Δ, and many other manuscripts and cursives. The former preposition denotes his sacrificial descent from out of heaven, the latter his Divinity (Westcott).

<sup>2</sup> The Πατὴρ of T.R. is omitted by Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and R.T., with N<sup>o</sup>, A, B, D, L, T, and numerous cursives.

<sup>3</sup> Δέδωκέ μοι, the gift contemplated as a completed act. The construction is broken; the πᾶν δ, etc., is in the nominative absolute.

<sup>1</sup> ὅτι instead of δέ stands on the high authority of N, A, B, C, D, etc., thirty cursives, and Italic, Syriac, and Coptic Versions, and is preferred by Tischendorf (8th edit.) and R.T.

<sup>2</sup> N, B, C, D, L, T, U, Italic, Syriac, and Coptic read τοῦ πεμφαντός με in place of τοῦ Πατρός μου. So Tischendorf (8th edit.) and R.T.

our Lord uttered these verses (37—40) to the innermost circle of his followers. The first discourse closes with ver. 36. The disciples looked with eager and inquisitive glances at each other and at their Lord, and received these teachings of the Lord concerning the relation he was sustaining to the Father, and the claim he made to be the Almoner of the mercy and minister of the judgment of him that sent him. This great utterance corresponds with the celebrated synoptic recital (Matt. xi. 26, 27).

Vers. 41—51.—(c) *The murmur of the Jews met by additional claim that his "flesh" is the "living bread."* The passage here following resumes the narrative of the impression produced by the extraordinary discourse that had preceded. The question of "the Jews" does not turn at all upon the explanation he had just given to his disciples in vers. 36—40, but goes back to the theme of vers. 29—36. "The Jews" need not be restricted to the Jewish or the aristocratic or bigoted portion of the Galilæan *ὄχλος*, but rather to the Jewish authorities of the towns of Bethsaida and Capernaum, who had been stirred up into active opposition by the report of the miracles and of the explanation which the Lord had put upon them.

Ver. 41.—The Jews therefore murmured concerning him. Perhaps in ch. vii. 32 *γουργεῖν* means simply "whisper;" but throughout the New Testament (1 Cor. x. 10; Luke v. 30, with *πρός*; Matt. xx. 11, with *κατά*; cf. Acts vi. 1; Phil. ii. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 9; Wisd. i. 10) it has the malevolent meaning conveyed in the LXX. It is used to denote very rebellious feelings against God (Exod. xvi. 7—9; Numb. xi. 1; xiv. 27). The Attic writers used *τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς*. Because he said, I am the Bread which cometh down from heaven. This was a reasonable putting together of the three assertions: "I am the Bread of life" (ver. 35); "I have come down from heaven" (ver. 38); and "The bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven" (ver. 33). "The Jews" did not misunderstand his meaning. They understood it perfectly, and rebelled against it.

Ver. 42.—They were saying (*ἐλέγον*)—the one to the other, murmuring in critical and angry mood, and not necessarily in his hearing; for he did not reply to their express assertion, and proceeded rather to enlarge and reiterate the great theme which he had already deduced in the hearing of his disciples. Weiss (vol. iii. 6) thinks that John

has here introduced an amplification which belongs to a totally different connection. Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph—(cf. ch. i. 46; Luke iv. 22). We cannot argue from this passage whether Joseph was living still or had died. The murmuring is explicable on either hypothesis. The traditional impression is that "Joseph" had fallen asleep. Either hypothesis is compatible with the language—whose father and mother we know? They may have merely meant "whose reputed parentage is well understood," without implying that either one or other no longer lived. The fact of his parentage was admitted. This is an apparent point-blank contradiction to the descent of his humanity from heaven. The supposition of the truth of the immaculate and supernatural birth of Jesus is perfectly compatible with the ignorance of the "Jews" about it. This deep mystery of love could not be made matter of public discourse, nor do our narratives suggest that the fact itself was promulgated until after the Resurrection. Whatever was apprehended by the sacred society of the hill country of Judæa, or laid up in the breasts of Joseph and Mary and of the few who pondered these strange things in their holy circle at Nazareth, we know not. The synoptic narratives, though they assert the mystery, do not give the smallest indication that it was ever referred to, or made an article of faith, by Jesus himself. The difficulty that besets this passage is rather the silence of John, both here and elsewhere, concerning the manner of the Lord's birth. He, who knew the mother of Jesus, and must have been acquainted with the language of Matthew and Luke, says nothing in vindication of the words of the Lord. Here was an opportunity for putting the "Jews" in the wrong, by endorsing the synoptic account which he did not embrace. We have already seen (cf. notes, ch. i. 14; iii. 1—6) that the underlying presupposition of the miraculous birth is the best explanation of his own words. Still his silence is remarkable. It is best accounted for by the fact that he was evermore looking to the moral, spiritual significance of all the miracles he records, as well as of those to which he vaguely refers. He is content with the words of Jesus. They are the surest explanation of the synoptic narrative. The Jews, on the basis of their general knowledge, are struck with consternation. How (now) therefore<sup>1</sup> doth he say, I have come

<sup>1</sup> R.T., Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, Alford, Tregelles, have accepted *ἦν* instead of *οὐν*, on the authority of B, C, T, although T.R. reads *οὐν*, with Lachmann, on the authority of S, A, D, L, T, Δ, other uncials and cursives, and the Italic Version,



down out of heaven? This was not an irrational nor a malignant criticism. This question must have been asked by those who heard for the first time the stupendous claim. It would not seem that these interrogations were put in the hearing of our Lord. His "answer" goes back to the "question" as it shaped itself in the hearts of the disciples, and involves some of the deepest truths which he had previously communicated to Nicodemus. He demands and must have a new humanity, a regenerated audience, subjects for his kingdom who are born anew or from above. He who came down from heaven insists that his true disciples must become what he is—heaven-born, must have a life out of heaven. They must be "of God;" they must "hear" and "learn of the Father," must be drawn by Divine hands, if they would or should come to him. No lip-homage, no fickle desire for the Messianic kingdom, would satisfy him.

Vers. 43, 44.—Jesus answered <sup>1</sup> and said to them, Murmur not among yourselves; or, *with one another*. He had searched out a deeper reason for their murmuring than their probable involuntary ignorance of certain miraculous facts. No man can come (is able to come) to me except the Father, who hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. In the previous utterance "all" which the Father "gives" to the Son "comes" to him, reaches him, enters into close relationship with him. Here "no one is able" by the nature of the case "to come" except this process and method of a Divine giving is realized. The Father's "giving" to him is described in new terms, as "the drawing" by the Father who hath sent him. The word *ἀρκεῖν* almost always implies resistless or at least successful force, in the stretching of a sail, the dragging of a net, the force applied to a prisoner, the drawing of a sword (ch. xviii. 10; xxi. 6, 11; Acts xvi. 19; Jas. ii. 6). It is used also in Attic writers for the internal drawing of desire towards pleasure (Plato, 'Phædr.', p. 238, a; cf. Virgil, 'Ecl.', ii. 65, "*Trahit sua quemque voluptas*"). Our Lord also uses the word for his own attractive force, for the Divine magnetism of his cross, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me;" I will counteract all the power of the prince of this world (see ch. xii. 32, note). This drawing of the Father to the Son by an internal operation on the heart must be interpreted

by the attractive force of the love and sacrifice of the Father which is seen in Christ's being lifted up; and still further explained by his own subsequent assertion in ch. xiv., "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." So that, while the whole action centres in Christ, the process begins and ends in the Father's heart. The Father loves the world; the Father would have all men come to him, have access to himself. To secure this Divine result he sends forth his Son with all the attractive force of love and death. This Divine humanity is a sufficient revelation of the perfect will and infinite love of God. The drawing of Christ to himself is nothing less than the drawing of the Father to himself; for Christ came to do the will of him that sent him. Nor is this all, for all the "internal pressing" and revelation of need and peril, the conviction of sin and righteousness and judgment by the Comforter, is at once the Father's drawing and also the attraction of the Son, and the veritable "coming" of a soul through Christ to the Father. The Father "gives" to the Son by this double process: (1) he manifests his own fatherly heart in Christ; (2) he opens men's eyes to see the Father in the Son. "*No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.*" I," says Christ, "will complete and consummate his life at my great day of coronation and triumph." The several thoughts must be taken together, and they explain one another. The coming of men to the Father, access to God himself in the glory of the resurrection-life, is the sublime consummation. Christ is sent, the Only Begotten is given, he is lifted up to draw men by the revelation of the Father's heart to himself, and thus in seeing and knowing that Christ is in the Father and the Father in him, the soul is drawn by the Father to the Son—is drawn by the Son to the Father. Yet the subjective work of the Father in the mind, moving it even to see the full meaning of the Christ and to yield to his attractive force, is strongly suggested. The direct contact of God himself with each soul that seeks, finds, and comes to him through Christ is made evident. There is, as Reuss says, "*la base mystique de la theologie Chretienne*," rather than the announcement of a predestinating decree. Even Calvin says, "As to the kind of drawing, it is not violent, so as to compel men by external force; but still it is a powerful influence of the Holy Spirit which makes men willing who formerly were unwilling."

Ver. 45.—It is written in the prophets; either in the division of Scripture called "the prophets," or because the substance of the statement is found to pervade the pro-

Vulgate, both Syriac Versions, and patristic quotations. Bâle Revisers place it in the margin.

<sup>1</sup> The *ὁψ* of T.R., Lachmann, Griesbach, of N, A, D, is here omitted by R.T., Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), with B, C, K, L, and ten others and numerous versions.

phets, and to receive express, if not literal, utterance in Isa. liv. 13. The prophet, on describing the glorious triumphs of the Servant of the Lord in his new kingdom, added (LXX.), *Καὶ πάντας τοὺς υἱοὺς σου διδασκούς Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐν πολλῇ εἰρήνῃ τὰ τέκνα σου*, "And all thy sons [I will make] to be taught of God, and in much [great] peace thy children" (cf. also Jer. xxxi. [LXX., xxxviii.] 34, for the same thought in other words). Godet suggests that the former passage was in the *haphthora*, from the prophets—the lesson for the day. If the discourse was uttered in the synagogue of Capernaum, this is not impossible. At all events, the "and" (*καί*) which here follows suggests that the quotation is taken from Isaiah. And they shall all be taught of God; i.e. direct teaching by God is the prime requisite of any spiritual apprehension, even of the mysteries of Christ the Revealer. This solemn truth is affirmed by the entire history of Christ. The vision of his majesty, even contact with his ineffable love, the sight of his humiliation and of the shedding of his precious blood, did not, by any necessarily acting law of mind, induce faith. Divine teaching by the Spirit of the Father and Son is the preliminary (see notes on ch. xvi. 5—8, on the mission of the Comforter) to believing on Christ. "Taught of God" (*διδασκούμενοι Θεοῦ*), translated in Vulgate, *docibiles Dei* (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 9), means more than the reception of one lesson in the school of God, and suggests a prolonged experience and a rich communion between the Teacher and the taught. Every one (therefore) <sup>1</sup> [*πᾶς*, referring to the *πάντες* of ver. 45a, and to the quotation, is not so much every human being, as the "all" of the Messianic kingdom—the "all" of God's "sons" and "children"] that hath heard<sup>2</sup> from the Father, and hath learned (of him), cometh unto me. Hearing may end in heedlessness, even when the Lord God Almighty speaks with us. His revelations at great epochs, his inner voice at special moments in our religious history, may be disregarded. The voice of God may be heard, yet not obeyed; the voice of conscience and revelation and inspiration, the sacred monitions and warnings of the heart, may all be slighted.

<sup>1</sup> *Ὁὖν* of T.R., with later uncials, is omitted by N, B, C, D, L, etc., and by many Italic manuscripts, the Vulgate, Coptic, etc.; by some cursives and Fathers, by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, R.T., Westcott and Hort.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἀκούσας*, T.R. and R.T., Tischendorf (8th edit.), is sustained by N, A, B, C, K, L, T, Vulgate, Origen, and Cyril. Godet, on the authority of the later uncials and cursives, prefers *ἀκούων*.

But every one that hath heard the Father, and has also accepted the lesson—has felt the Divine drawing; being willing to do the will of the Father, he knows of the doctrine, whether it be of God, and he comes to Christ. Later on, Christ said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." It is one thing to "hear," another to "learn," another to "come." These three stages still further illumine the "drawing" of the Father, and the method which the Father has adopted of so giving men to Christ that he may ultimately fold them in his arms and press them to his heart. Lest, however, the hearers of Jesus, then or now, should conclude that the kind of direct teaching of which the prophets spake, and which he endorsed, was of that immediate kind which himself enjoyed, and which alone justifies this language, he continued—

Ver. 46.—Not that any one hath seen the Father, save he who is from God, he hath seen the Father. "Hearing" and "learning" do not amount to the beatific vision. "No one [as John said, ch. i. 18] hath seen God at any time, the only begotten [Son] who is in the bosom of the Father [*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, ch. i. 1; *εἰς τὸν κόλπον*, ch. i. 18], he hath declared him" (cf. Matt. xi. 27). The full revelation of the Father is alone possible to one who is (*παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ*) "forth from God," yet evermore standing in close association with God. Cyril and Erasmus here suggest the fact that Christ distinguishes himself from Moses, and some suggest that Christ protests against the supposition which would make the spiritual "inner Christ" of modern speculation of more value than the historical personality. But *παρὰ* in association with *ὦν* indicates more than mission from God, and obviously stands in indissoluble relation with the teaching of the prologue, viz. the eternal pre-existence of the personal Logos—the identity of the Person who was made flesh with the Christ of this discourse. These words bring our Lord's teaching back to a full justification or reassertion of the statement that he had come down from heaven.

Ver. 47.—Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth [on<sup>1</sup> me] hath eternal life. He has here given a new turn to the conversation, and repeated what had been the substance of several discourses (ch. iii. 16, 18, 36; v. 24), and formed, indeed, the starting-place of this (vers. 27, 35, 36).

<sup>1</sup> *Εἰς ἐμὲ* stands, with A, C, D, r, Δ, and cursives, Fathers, and versions. N, B, L, T, Armenian (Syriac adds, *in Deum*), and Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T., have omitted; Alford and Tregelles bracket it.

The full acceptance of Christ provides "living water" for the thirsty, "living bread," "bread from heaven," for the hungry—an inward refreshment, a Divine nourishment, an inexhaustible supply. "He that believeth on me" (whether the *εἰς ἐμὲ* were in the original text or not, they are involved in the sense) has entered on the possession of an eternal blessedness of being, superior to death, transcending time and sense—he "hath eternal life."

Ver. 48 repeats once more the statement of vers. 32, 35 (see notes): I am the Bread of life. Not only do I give you more than Moses gave your fathers, but I *am* the Father's Gift. I myself am the Gift—I am the Bread of which, if you partake, you will hunger no more, you will need no more, you will die no more; the life then thrilling through you will be *eternal*. "The invisible God is the Source of eternal life; the human nature of the Son of God is the visible form which contains and imparts this to the souls of men" (Archdeacon Watkins).

Vers. 49, 50.—Your fathers did eat the manna in the wilderness, and they died. The Lord went back to the very words of the Jews in ver. 31. The Heaven-given manna by which Jehovah sustained the temporal life of the fathers in the wilderness did not convey the antidote to death. "The carcases [of these fathers] fell in the wilderness." He does not say, "perished out of God's sight for ever," or were condemned, but that there was nothing in the eating of manna which arrested, or averted, or triumphed, over death; yet he added: This (Bread of life) is the Bread which cometh down from heaven, in order that any one (*τις*) may eat thereof, and may not die. The eating of the Bread of life (the life-giving Bread), which I myself am, the thorough assimilation, the entire acceptance of me as God's Gift of life to the world, confers the very principle of life; and, though a partaker may seem to perish, he does *not* die (cf. ch. viii. 51—xi. 26, notes)—he will not "taste of death," "he will never die." The life will be stronger than death; it will survive apparent extinction. Meyer says that here Christ reserves to ver. 51 the positive offer "of his own concrete Personality, and is exhibiting the true Bread, according to its real nature." Still he has said, "I am the life-giving Bread," and is undoubtedly preparing for the following announcement, which adds a new and startling thought, calculated to sustain the former one.

Ver. 51.—I am (not only the "Bread of God," the "Bread of life," the life-giving Personality, but) the living Bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of

this<sup>1</sup> Bread, he will live<sup>2</sup> for ever. With this verse we see, instead of monotony, a threefold advance. (1) In place of the life-giving Bread, he declares himself to be *as* Bread, yet a living Person, possessing therefore in himself the essential principle and energy of life. (2) Instead of *coming down*, used characteristically or universally, he points to a definite, concrete, historic fact—"that has come down out of heaven." (3) Instead of saying, "he may not die," we find the glorious assertion, "he *will* live for ever." The kind of eating of which he speaks becomes clearer; the kind of food, the kind of death, the kind of life, all burst into light which points back to the first great word of this discourse, viz. "Labour for that food which endureth unto eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you, for this one the Father, even God, hath sealed." "The miraculous feeding of yesterday was but the metaphor by which I was conveying this thought, that I was providing an inexhaustible supply for the eternal life of that humanity which I have assumed." In the last clause of the verse he made a yet further advance: Yea, and the bread which I shall give is my flesh (which I shall give)<sup>3</sup> for the life of the world. The *καὶ . . . δὲ* of the commencement of the clause show a continuation of the thought with a new departure, co-ordination, and progress, "Yea, and the bread which I shall give is my flesh." Though the word "flesh" is often described by some of its frequent characteristics and qualities, and might be and has been regarded as the bodily and sensuous nature, and also as the seat of sin, it is,

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.) here reads, *ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ ἄρτου*, with N, A, e, and with four Latin quotations. *Τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου* is read by R.T., Westcott and Hort, as well as T.R., with B, C, L, T, and numerous other uncials and all cursives and versions.

<sup>2</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.) also reads *ζήσεται*, with N, D, L, 33; the reading of T.R., Alford, and R.T., *ζήσεται*, rests on the great bulk of other authorities.

<sup>3</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.) here reads, *ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς, ἡ σὰρξ μου ἐστίν*, with N and m, and quotation from Tertullian. The reading of Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and R.T. is that of B, C, D, L, T. The Italic, Syriac, Thebaic Versions, involve the omission of the clause, *ἢ ἐγὼ δώσω*. This clause is supposed by them to be a device to clear up the difficulty and harshness of the reading they prefer. It is, however, found in the great bulk of manuscripts (A is defective). Meyer and Godet regard the omission of the clause as an early error, occasioned by the words occurring in the previous part of the sentence.

both by Paul and John, used for the *nature of man* as a creature—its totality regarded on its earthly side, the entire “humanity” which Christ assumed, the common antithesis to “spirit” viewed as the Divine supernatural gift to man. He was (1 Tim. iii. 16) “manifest in the flesh,” in “the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. viii. 3)—in a flesh free from all sin. He came “in the flesh” (1 John ii. 16; iv. 2). This humanity of his he gives, or rather, when he spake these words, he would give, *to be eaten*, to be assimilated by faith; and, having reached this point, he added (*i.e.* if we retain the questioned clause, which, with Meyer and Godet, we see no sufficient reason for discarding), which flesh, which humanity of his, he will further give to be slain and sacrificed for the sake of, or on behalf of, the world. This clause, which the Vatican Codex, etc., reject, proceeds clearly on the supposition that Christ advances here to the prediction and promise of his death. It is so worded as all the more to justify the emphasis he subsequently lays upon the death itself as essential to a full participation in himself. In this verse and closing utterance he prepares for further disclosures, and the flesh of Christ receives explanation from the rich and varied reference to it in the final words of the discourse, where the *flesh* is the great metaphor of his Divine humanity, and the *blood* is the expressive description of his awful sacrifice. He, the Life-giver, the Living One, the Bread of life, the living Bread, will give himself to what men call death, that they, apprehending fully, adequately accepting the greatness of the Divine gift, may, like himself, transform death (so-called death) into the portal of eternal life. These words are the new starting-point for this great disclosure. The very inner thought of Jesus seems to shape itself as we read. The Paschal sacrifice, eaten at that season as the sign that the theocratic nation had been chosen to covenant and eternal relation with Jehovah, must have been present to his mind. His own approaching death and sacrifice, by which he would bind those who receive him into an eternal covenant with himself, his relation to the whole world, the gift of the Father to him, the gift of himself to the world by the Father,—all are presented to him, and the movements of his great heart reveal themselves as he proceeds.

Vers. 52—59.—(d) *The conflict among the Jews leads Christ to insist further on separate participation of his flesh and blood as the condition of life.*

Ver. 52.—The Jews therefore strove one with another (ἐμάχοντο represents more vigorous demonstration of their difficulties than the ἐγγύς of ver. 41). They were not unanimous in their judgment. Some

said one thing, and others said another. The “Jews” had not yet come to a unanimous opinion that this wonderful Being was talking sheer heresy or incomprehensible mystery. They knew his habit of metaphorical speech, and that underneath common imagery he was in the habit of conveying doctrines the full purport of which was not at once apparent. Some denounced him as uttering an intolerable riddle. Some saw, in a measure, through it, and hated the doctrine that was thereby conveyed. How could he be so essential to the life of the world? and how, said the pure materialist, “how can he give us his flesh to eat?” A question of great interest arises. He has already identified, in ver. 35, “coming to him,” “reaching him” under the drawing of the Father, with the transcendent blessing of life eternal, of victory over death, and resurrection. In ver. 40 “beholding” and “believing” are cognate or equivalent conditions of life and resurrection. In ver. 47, again, “believing,” *per se*, is the essential and all-comprehensive condition. Now, has Christ added, in this verse, anything fresh to the fundamental ideas? Let it be pondered that he has already equated “believing” with eating a bread that endureth to everlasting life (vers. 27—29). He has declared himself to be the “Bread of life,” and to be appropriated by “coming” and “believing.” He has spoken of himself as “living Bread,” which, coming for the life of the world from heaven itself, is offered as food. Now, what more than this has he said when he declared that he will offer his “*flesh*” as heavenly food? The Jews undoubtedly show, by their mutual contest, that he had put some part of the previous oracle in a still more enigmatical, if not offensive, form. So far the imagery was not altogether beyond them. Here it takes on a form which excites angry controversy. If they understood him to mean “doctrine,” “truth,” “cause,” even “office,” as Head of a spiritual school—as one providing by his gracious will ample nutriment for all who would eat of the rich banquet of his words—they would, to some extent, follow him. The eating of the tree of life was a well-known figure in Hebrew Scripture (Prov. iv. 17; ix. 5); of the language of Isaiah (lv. 2), the action of Ezekiel (iii. 1—3), and the imagery of Hosea (x. 13). In the ‘Midrash on Eccl. ii. 24; iii. 12; viii. 15,’ “eating and drinking” is said always to refer to the Law (Edersheim and Wünsche). But when he spoke of giving his “*flesh*” for the life of the world, he passed beyond the limits of their interpreting power. They did not see through his imagery; nor did Jesus exactly answer the angry query which they were putting one to another.

Vers. 53, 54.—Jesus said to them.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye have eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and have drunk his blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth (τρώγων, "eateth with pleasure, eagerness," is repeated four times, as perhaps a stronger expression than φάγων) my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. This result, it should be seen, is identical with the promises made to "beholding," "coming," "believing." Life and resurrection will really follow these acts and conditions; but then it is obvious that "beholding," "coming," "believing," must veritably cover what is contained in this last statement. There is no mere tautology. These words express more fully the original condition. They are not new conditions, but a further imaginative exposition of the former ones. The believing involves an assimilation into the very substance of the believer's nature of that which he here specifies as "flesh and blood." Reuss and Luthardt, and to some extent Moulton, admit that by "flesh and blood" he means no more than "flesh;" that under "flesh" is included "blood;" that by both he simply means "himself." Lange urges that by "flesh" is meant "human nature"—his "manhood;" but by "flesh and blood" (see Matt. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 16), "inherited nature"—the humanity of Christ in "historical manifestation." But he passes on to say that this manifestation culminates, is completed, in death, and, thus completed, the life of Christ is the nourishment of the real life of man. Tholuck: "The addition of αἷμα to σὰρξ only expresses, by its main constituents, the sensible human nature." The great bulk of interpreters take the additional mention of drinking of his blood to connote an entire acceptance of the atoning sacrifice, of the Paschal blood-shedding, to be effected for the deliverance of the world (so Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Grotius, Lücke, Neander, Keim, Meyer, Weiss, etc.). "Eating of the flesh," then, would mean acceptance of his humanity, of the manifestation of the eternal love in the Son of man; and "drinking his blood" would mean entire mental assimilation also of the terrible culmination of his mission in violent, sacrificial death. This momentous condition of life eternal is stated both negatively and positively. Without the participation in this twofold aspect of the Lord and his work, there is no life. Unless "coming to him," "believing on him," means an acceptance of his humanity, an apprehension of that Personality in whom the Word was incarnate, and an utter surrender of the soul to the rending of that flesh and shedding of the blood which is the life, i.e. to the death of the Son of man, it is not the coming to

him and believing on him of which he has already spoken. He that does thus eat and drink will satisfy a craving after nourishment and refreshment. Unless a man consciously or unconsciously accepts, absorbs, the sublime and wondrous gift of the Divine humanity from the second Man, the Lord from heaven, rather than from the first man, he has no life in himself. Human nature apart from the new creation and the new beginning is a dying, not a living, entity. The new life quickened by the Incarnation is not all that Christ would give. The blood of the Son of man, to be accepted in the same way, is a further exposition of the object of faith. The "eating" and "drinking" are therefore phrases which portray the very intimate and close form of that contact with, and dependence upon, the incarnation and the sacrifice of the Son of God, which Christ erewhile defines in broader, vaguer metaphor. A great question has arisen on these verses—whether our Lord is pointing to, or making prophetic reference to, the institution of the Eucharist, about which the fourth evangelist is strangely silent.<sup>1</sup> Certain of the early Fathers—Chrysostom, Cyril, and Theophylact—have given it this meaning, though the great bulk of the patristic writers—Ignatius, Irenæus, Origen, Clemens Alex., Tertullian, and even Cyprian (though the passage may be applied by them to the Eucharist as one way or method of spiritually eating and drinking the Son of man)—do most obviously interpret the passage itself of direct and spiritual, not the indirect and sacramental manducation of the living Bread. The same view is presented by Eusebius, Athanasius, and Cyril of Alexandria. For the first four centuries all that was done was to apply the argument of ch. vi., in order to press the importance of communicating sacramentally. This led the Romanist writers to go further, and regard the participation in the sacramental body and blood as essential to life eternal. Pope Innocent I., Bishop of Rome, A.D. 402, was the first distinguished man who brought up out of this passage "the necessity of communicating infants;" and from the time of his synodical epistle (A.D. 417) the Latin Churches interpreted the passage, "Except you receive the Eucharist, you have no life in you." The views of Augustine were vacillating or are dubious. Fulgentius shows that he had, to some extent, broken loose from this narrow view when he concluded that baptism without the Eucharist did convey all the benefits of the body and blood of Christ. Numerous Schoolmen (see Al-

<sup>1</sup> The special excursus of Lücke, Lange, and Waterland, on 'Eucharist,' ch. v., vi.

bertinus, 'De Eucharistia,' lib. i. c. 30; and Wake, 'Disc. of the Eucharist,' p. 20) rejected the sacramental interpretation, and the Reformers most justly repudiated it. Luther, Melancthon, Beza, Grotius, Owen, Lampe, Cocceius, asserted that the whole construction of the passage, which treats "coming," "believing," as the complete conditions of life and resurrection, must not be held to transform an, as yet, uninstituted ceremonial into the sole method of "believing." Notwithstanding this wide protest, the opponents of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel—Bretschneider, Strauss, Baur, Thoma, Hilgenfeld, and numerous others—see in this passage the conception of a mystically disposed second-century divine, who placed the Eucharistic ceremony in the lips of Jesus long before the institution. But while this view can be without hesitation rejected, it is obvious that there was a spiritual participation in the "humanity" and the "sacrifice" of the Son of God which Christ called upon the Capernaïtes to experience—one which must have been possible to Old Testament saints, to little children, to all who are acceptable to God and accepted by him. Such participation is, without doubt, aided and rendered peculiarly possible, thinkable, in the Eucharist. These words were timed, therefore, to bear the rich and twofold sense of Holy Scripture. Observe: (1) The use of *σῶμα* rather than *σάρξ*, in every account of the institution of the Supper, is not without special meaning; *σάρξ* and *αἷμα* meaning the whole of his humanity, and the entire fulness of the sacrifice for the world; while *σῶμα καὶ αἷμα* suggest that organized personal life in which the Incarnation culminated, and the blood which was shed for the remission of sins. The *σῶμα* is not without reference to the new "body" in which the spirit would be ultimately enshrined. (2) The phrase, "drinking of the blood," is peculiar to these verses. In the Eucharist we "drink of the cup which is the new covenant in the blood of Christ." "The hand of history," says Eidersheim, "has drawn out the telescope; and, as we gaze through it, every sentence and word sheds light upon the cross, and light from the cross carrying to us the twofold meaning—his death and its celebration in the great Christian sacrament."

Ver. 55.—A new justification is given for this great statement: For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. (The two active verbals are adopted, "eating," "drink-

ing;" but *βρώσις* and *πόσις* are used very frequently by the Attic writers for "food" and "drink," as well as for the processes of eating and drinking.) That is, Christ's flesh and blood stand in the same relation to the true life of man that food and drink do to the physical life of earth; and so, unless we duly and fully assimilate Divine humanity, we have no life in us. If we cannot assimilate food, we die. It must become part of our life-blood and permeate our system; so "the coming and believing" must mean such an acceptance of the Christ that the love of God penetrates our whole being, "even the joints and marrow of soul and spirit;" unless it does so, we have no life in us. Lange, even here, presses the idea of the flesh and blood of Christ as being true food, seeing that by believing historic contemplation we participate in the "historic form of his manifestation," and by spiritual contemplation and fervent faith we drink in the blood which is the life. The difference between *ἀληθής* and *ἀληθὺς* is nearly that between *ἀληθής* and *ἀληθίως*. The former is the antithesis of the merely apparent food; the latter would have meant genuine food answering to the ideal of food. "The true food" is the food for the inner man—food in all reality. The Lord was speaking to them of a unique relation which he sustained to the human race, and which cannot be explained away into some mere euphemism for the blessedness and stimulating character of the gospel message. This is made still more evident by his next words—

Ver. 56.—He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I (dwell) in him. This mutual indwelling is illustrated elsewhere (ch. xv. 1—5) by the image of the vine and its branches. The vine abides in the branch in the virtue of its life-giving forces. Cut away from the parent stem, it can do nothing. Fruitlessness condemns and fire consumes it. The branch abides in the vine, as deriving all its worth, its true place, its possibility of growth and fruit, from the vine (cf. also ch. xvii. 23; 1 John iii. 24; iv. 16). The dwelling of the believer in Christ involves an utter self-surrender to him, a recognition of the supreme claims of the God-Man and his work, a complete trust in him as the Source of all life, a sound and abiding place of rest, a justification before God as one with Christ, as one identified with him in his well-pleasing to the Father. The dwelling of Christ in the believer is the fulness and riches of the Divine life. Christ liveth in him (Gal. ii. 20), thinks in his thoughts, moves through his will. This is sanctification. The believer is in Christ as the members are in the body. Christ is in the believer as God is in his temple. What is

<sup>1</sup> Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T., read *ἀληθής* instead of *ἀληθὺς* of T.R., on the authority of N<sup>o</sup>, B, C, F<sup>o</sup>, K, L, and thirty other versions and quotations. *Ἀληθὺς* is one of the readings of N.

the condition of this mutual indwelling? Christ puts the condition of this Divine interpretation thus: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."<sup>1</sup> The verb is in the present tense, implying the continuous appropriation of the Divine sustenance.

Ver. 57.—Here is the grandest assertion of all. Christ began by speaking of himself as the Bread of God, as the life-giving Bread, as the living Bread of human souls. He made it then clear that he was this by reason of his Divine humanity given for the life of the world. He added to this that he was specially to be appropriated and accepted as a sacrifice, as the death-sacrifice, involved in his giving his flesh for the life of the world. The power conferred by his death in life and life in death for man, enabled him to institute eternal life-giving relations between himself and those who entirely accept and make their own this central reality. And now, to meet the nascent objection as to the unique grandeur of his position, he adds: As the living Father sent me. The phrase, "living Father," occurs nowhere else (cf. "righteous Father," ch. xvii. 25; "holy Father," ch. xvii. 11; "the living God," Matt. xvi. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Heb. x. 31; and above all, ch. v. 26, "As the Father hath life in himself, so he gave also to the Son to have life in himself"). Christ is speaking of the human position he assumed before them as *sent* by the Father who has life in himself, who is more than all his laws or all his works. Not merely as the Word, but as the Word of the living Father made flesh, he stands before them. And I live because of the Father. "Because he lives, I live; my life is guaranteed by his." This is the premiss, the platform on which he now stands (*διὰ τὸν Πατέρα* must not be confounded with *per Patrem*, or *διὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς*, as McLeod Campbell, who, in his interesting discussion on "Christ the Bread of Life," made this expression equivalent to the means and condition of the Saviour's life). From this premiss the Lord argues a corresponding relation of the believer to himself: So he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me. The points of comparison are: (1) The Father's life-imparting relation to Christ, and Christ's life-imparting relation to the believer. In both cases the life of one is the guarantee of the life of the other. (2) The sending of Christ by the Father, correlated with the eating of Christ by the believer. (3) The peculiar relation

of the believer to Christ. "He that eateth me" gathers up and really comprehends all that has gone before. It is, then, possible for the believer not only to share in the Divine humanity by his faith, and also in the fulness and significance of his (blood) death, but to have full possession of his Divine *personality*. "He that eateth me shall live because of me" (cf. "Because I live, ye shall live also," ch. xiv. 19). This is the vindication of the previous verse, and the climax of the argument.

Ver. 58.—Here the Lord returns once more to the starting-point of the discourse. This is the bread that came down from heaven (cf. vers. 50, 51). Already he had said, "I am the living Bread that came down from heaven," and he has expanded the statement to show how much was contained or involved in eating it. He has, moreover, emphasized the two sides of his offer of himself to the world, and shown how the twofold reception of both sides becomes a thorough acceptance of himself, and a twofold identification of himself with his people. He forthwith returns to the original statement, and to its implied contrast with that which these sign-loving Jews had demanded. Not as (*your*) fathers ate, and died: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. This is a strong reassertion of the language of vers. 49—51. Life itself in its highest sense shall be independent of death, and will triumph over it.

Ver. 59.—These things—probably referring to the discourse which followed upon the contest and discussion of the Jews among themselves (vers. 52—58), or it may include the entire discussion from ver. 40 onwards—he said in synagogue (or, *in a synagogue*), as he was teaching in Capernaum. Capernaum is thus distinctly verified as the place whither the multitudes had followed him. It was, as we learn from the synoptists, his second and habitual home in Galilee. In Warren's 'Recovery of Jerusalem,' p. 314, a description of *Tell-Hum* and of its ruins occurs, and amongst them the remains of an ancient synagogue. "On turning over a large block of stone," says Wilson, "we found the pot of manna engraved on its face." "This very symbol may have been before the eyes of those who heard the Lord's words" (Westcott). This note of time and place is important, as showing that thus early in his ministry our Lord pro-

<sup>1</sup> D here adds, *Καθὼς ἐν μοι ὁ Πατήρ καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ. Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ἡμῖν, ἐὰν μὴ λαβήτε τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὡς τὸν ἄρτον τῆς ζωῆς οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν αὐτῷ*. There are some Latin versions which retain it.

<sup>1</sup> T.R. and Lachmann, the later uncials D, Δ, etc., and the Italic Version, Vulgate, and Syriac, read, *ὑμῶν τὸ μάννα* (Nonnus added ἐν τῷ ἐρήμῳ); but N, B, C, D, L, T, 33, Coptic, Curetonian Syriac, Æthiopic, omit it, and so Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Westcott and Hort, and R.T.

claimed in Galilee, as well as in Jerusalem, the deepest things of his own consciousness and intentions; that the teaching in Galilee was not, as Renan would have us apprehend, nothing more than an idyllic progress of personal popularity and rapturous hosanna. The Lord knew that he must offend those who would by force constrain him to be their Messianic King, and made it by this discourse clear that spiritual communion with his inner life, as a Divine, Heaven-sent Representative, as One suffering and dying for the world, was the only and supreme condition of deriving and sharing in his own supernatural and eternal life.

The effect of this discourse and the crisis that followed in his public ministry is now described. The words of Jesus led to deeper faith and to a more determined antagonism. "The light shone into the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." "He came to his own, and his own received him not; but to as many as received, he gave power to become sons of God."

Vers. 60—71.—(4) *The twofold effect of these instructions.*

Vers. 60—66.—(a) *The unbelief of some, which led him to predict the ascension of his humanity to where HE was before.*

Ver. 60.—Many therefore of his disciples. This word is used in a wider sense than of the twelve. The synoptists tell us of much labour already done in this neighbourhood, and a considerable harvest of souls reaped, so far as a general acknowledgment of his claims and an expectation that he was the Messiah was involved: When they heard it (*i.e.* the entire instruction given in open synagogue), said, This is a hard saying (*λόγος* cannot or need not be confined to any one of these *ρήματα*, but may easily embrace them all). The discourse was *σκληρός*, harsh, the opposite of *μαλακός*, a word used by the unprofitable servant of his master (Matt. xxv. 24). It does not mean "hard to be understood," but difficult to accept or be content with. Luthardt here reiterates his conviction that there is no reference in it to the death of Christ, and that the disciples were simply unwilling to accept the idea of his supreme claims and his constant return to the eating and drinking of his flesh and blood and identification of this eternal life with participation in his corporality. But surely Meyer and Westcott, etc., are far nearer to the truth in referring the expression to their unwillingness to accept the bloody death of their Messiah, or to entrust themselves to a Divine Personality whose most distinctive act would be his sacrifice. This was the

gross and terrible offence which made the cross a stumbling-block to the Jew (see ch. xii. 34; 1 Cor. i. 23; Gal. v. 11; Matt. xvi. 21, etc.). Who is able to listen to him? This seems not only to be the possible, but most probable, translation of the genitive with *ἀκούω*. It was the language, not of "the Jews," but of "the disciples."

Ver. 61.—But Jesus, knowing in himself—not necessarily by supernatural penetration, for many signs of impatience may have been manifested—that his disciples murmured (see ver. 41, note) concerning this hard argument, said unto them, Doth this cause you to stumble? (see note on ch. xvi. 1).

Ver. 62.—If it does put difficulties in your way, then how will it be if you behold the Son of man ascending up to where he was before? This unfinished and ambiguous sentence and query have been variously interpreted. Some have argued that our Lord here simply refers to the "resurrection;" that he told his hearers they would have an opportunity of observing that, after death, he would return to where he was before, that is, to the conditions of earthly life. The striking antithesis between "descending from" and "ascending" almost compels the repudiation of this view. Did Christ, however, mean to ask them whether, under the new condition of things, all ground of offence would not be taken away? or to imply that their faith would have to be put to a still greater strain, and that they would stumble at length irretrievably? Lücke, De Wette, Kuinoel, Meyer, chiefly urge the latter, and on the ground: (1) That in John's Gospel the death of Christ is always looked at as his real glorification, and that therefore by *ἀναβαίνειν* he was referring in his euphemistic fashion to his death in the true Johannine phrase as a going to God (cf. ch. xiii. 3, a return to the Father; xiv. xvi. 5, 28). (2) That John does not describe the Ascension as a physical fact. Meyer does not allow that ch. iii. 13 and xx. 17 are sufficient with this phrase to justify such a reference to the great event referred to by Mark, Luke, and Paul, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Against Meyer and those who agree with him it should be noticed that *ἀναβαίνειν* is never used for "death" of Christ. The phrases, *πάγειν τῷ Πατρί* and *εἰλεῖν*, etc., are used for this purpose. Moreover, when a phrase was wanted to denote the twofold idea of uplifting on the cross and ascension to the skies, *ὑψωθῆναι* is the word twice used in the Fourth Gospel (ch. iii. 14; xii. 32—34). Moreover, if death could be realized as such a *θεωρεῖν* of glory and fullness of life, the offence of the cross, and scandal of participation in and dependence upon the flesh and blood of Christ, would be reduced



and not augmented. To Meyer's objection that these Galilean disciples would not see the ascending Christ, and therefore the supposition would be tantalizing, it is sufficient to reply (1) that, in a similar sense, there was no reason to suppose they would see the Lord suffer and die upon the cross; (2) that, as Christ Jesus was evidently "set forth as crucified" among the Galatians (iii. 1), so these Galilean disciples, through the vision of the apostles, would verily see the Son of man suffer, die, and ascend. Apart also from the inappropriateness of the word *ἀναβαλεῖν* to convey the subtle thought of the transfiguration of death as such, there was not, apart from resurrection and ascension to glory—which is the additional matter to which our Lord referred—any justification of the phrase, whereas it coincides decidedly with the expressions used of the pre-existing glory of the great Personality who, though calling himself "Son of man," yet consciously refers to his existence before the world was (cf. ch. viii. 58; xvii. 5, 24; Col. i. 17). Again, the *ἀναβαλεῖν* of these words stands in imposing antithesis to the repeated use of *καταβαλεῖν* of the previous discourse. He had been sent "from heaven," "sent by the living Father," he had "come down from heaven," "to give himself and his flesh for the life of the world," and he now leads his disciples to suspend their murmuring at the form of his discourse. They may behold and see a greater marvel yet, such a losing of his humanity in God and glory, that they will be able to apprehend more fully what he means by eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Of course, there might be some who are so entirely obtuse to the conception of this close identification with him during the time of his manifestation in the flesh, that they will be still more powerless to receive the spiritual interpretation when, for believing minds, the idea would become clear. John recorded this discourse a generation after the mighty effects of the Resurrection and Ascension had been produced. We know that long before he presented these outlines the ideas presented in it had been widely diffused. St. Paul had spoken of Christ as "the second Man from heaven," as invested and clothed in a "spiritual body," as "the last Adam," as "a life-giving Spirit," and the Epistle to the Hebrews had represented him as "having passed through the heavens" that he might fill all things. Whence came such august ideas about the Man Jesus, if not from himself? The offence of the cross has never ceased, and Athenians and many since have mocked at the story of the Resurrection and Ascension; but notwithstanding this, there is an ever-increasing multitude who from the day of his ascension

till now have been finally convinced. They have understood, as they would never have done without such help, that it was possible, since he had passed through these heavens that he might fill all things, to hold the most entire and intimate communion with him, both as the God-Man and as the Paschal Lamb. Moreover, the prince of this world has been cast out and judged because Christ has gone to the Father. He has been lifted up, and is drawing all men to himself. When the Son of man in the continuity of his Person shall be beheld as ascending into the glory from which he in his Divine nature descended, then those who stumbled at the idea of intimate life-giving participation in himself will "come to see that the words can only be understood spiritually" (Moulton). The ascension of the humanity to the life and glory of the pre-existent Deity of the Son of God was a conception firmly grasped by St. Paul (Eph. iv. 10; Phil. ii. 6—9), and must have been based on the Lord's own words. It is only by the exaltation of the man into God that we are able to participate in the Divine humanity. Weiss, unfortunately, cannot believe that there was any reference to the visible ascent to heaven, but simply to the termination of his earthly labours. The question, then, of ver. 62 is left to find its own answer and to give its own suggestion. But the interpretation here offered is strongly confirmed by—

Ver. 63.—It is the spirit that quickeneth (the *τὸ*, though omitted by N\*, is retained by all the principal editors); the flesh profiteth nothing; i.e. the "flesh" taken by itself, and apart from the life-giving Spirit which is its principium. The antithesis between "flesh" and "spirit" occurs frequently in the Gospel, and is one of the great points of Pauline doctrine. The Lord does not introduce the pronoun *μου* to *τὸ πνεῦμα* or *ἡ σὰρξ*. The statement is generalized, though having special reference to himself, or to the spirit and flesh of the Son of man. "Flesh," in neither St. Paul nor St. John, means the sensuous nature as opposed to the intellectual nature; nor does it mean the "body" as antithetic to the "soul"—the organized material frame, to which the Jews were attributing so much and felt to be the guarantee and seal of his spiritual efficiency (Meyer)—but the "creaturely nature," the "humanity" *per se* in all its parts. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Christ *quid* his humanity was fashioned by the Spirit, and the Spirit dwelt upon him with immeasurable potency. "The Logos became flesh," but that flesh itself was so ordered and prepared by the Holy Spirit as that it should sustain this lofty companionship.

Christ's own flesh, his nature, his humanity *per se*, and apart from the fulness of the Spirit, profiteth nothing. The mere human life, however spotless and ideal, could not be "eaten," i.e. could not be assimilated, though to some extent it might be imitated; but imitation is not faith. The "glory" that the apostles saw "of the Only Begotten of the Father, the fulness of grace and truth," in and through that wondrous life of Christ, was the glory given to his humanity by the creative Spirit. Apart from this consideration, a manducation of his flesh, even were it physically possible, was useless. It was not possible to participate in his humanity save through the Holy Spirit which generated him and regenerates us. The sentence doubtless points back to the original constitution of man, the speciality of whose life is that it was inbreathed by the Lord God himself. The use of the saying here was to make it still more clear that he gave his flesh to eat, not through any physical process, not through any sacramental rite, but through the Spirit to our spirit. Mr. Sadler, who takes the strong sacramental view of the entire passage, says, however, wisely and forcibly here, "Even flesh cannot be given to a corpse." We receive the gift, we know the love of God, whether sacramentally or not, through the Spirit. Christ does not deny or retract the statement, "Except ye eat the flesh," etc. He simply shows in what sense he meant the *whole mutual indwelling of himself and his people to be understood*. The Spirit is the Quickener. The Spirit is the life-fashioning, life-preserving Energy. The flesh, the human manifestation, apart from the Spirit which makes that human life the centre of Divine effluence, the focus for its Divine energy, profiteth nothing. Some have taken these words (like Chrysostom) as a contrast between a spiritual and literal interpretation of Christ's words. Luther and many Lutherans have urged the contrast between a right celebration and a merely material use of the sacrament. So more or less Augustine and Olshausen. Canon Westcott seems to limit the original meaning of "flesh" and "spirit," the one to the visible, temporal, corporeal only, and the other to the unseen eternal order of things, and he does not give to "flesh" here the fulness of meaning which it bears in the New Testament; but he says that this utterance is not limited to either of the views just referred to, though it may include them. Archdeacon Watkins remarks, "They think of a physical eating of his flesh, and this offends them; but what if they, who have thought of bread descending from heaven, see his body ascending into heaven? They will know then he cannot have meant this. The descent of the

Spirit will follow the ascent of the Son." The words that I have spoken<sup>1</sup> unto you are spirit and are life. The words which I have now uttered, these teachings of mine concerning myself, are (not merely "spiritual" or "life-giving," but) *spirit* and *life*, i.e. the way and method in which the Spirit can convey to you the *life eternal*. The words which I have spoken at all times have been the effulgence of my glory, the effluence of my Spirit. The seed of the kingdom is the Word of God. The contact of the Divine Spirit with the human spirit is not through teeth and palate, but through mental and moral processes. "Thou hast the words of eternal life," said Peter (ver. 68). Christ thus works his way back again to the receptivity of the mind and heart of his disciples. Believing is not only "coming," but, as he has before implied, it is the identical process which he has called "eating his flesh and drinking his blood." Christ's words are the ministry of himself, because the chief method of communicating his life-giving Spirit. In ch. xv. 4, 7 the Lord used both expressions, "I" and "my words," in identical relations: "Abide in me, and I in you;" "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you," etc.

Ver. 64.—But, he adds, there are some of you that believe not. "Some," not many, who were following him yet felt that they could not trust—could not accept his greatest revelations, these Divine assumptions, this spiritual position of his. The Divine humanity, the offered life, the cruel death, of the Son of God, the victory over death, the return to the Father, when put into words or when taught in metaphors even, were grounds of offence. The evangelist adds: For (the γάρ introduces the explanatory clause of the disciple who testified of these things) Jesus knew (knew absolutely, rather than came to know) from the beginning—referring to the commencement of his public ministry, when men began to close round him (ch. i. 43, 48; ii. 24), not from the beginning of time, or the beginning of their unbelief (Kling); he knew by his Divine penetration into their character, by their manner and spirit, and the nakedness and openness of all hearts before him—who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray him. Westcott here reminds us that the first indication of the sin of Judas occurs in close association with

<sup>1</sup> Ἀεὶλάληκα, with N, B, C, D, K, L, and many other uncials, numerous versions, and quotations, and adopted by Tregelles, Meyer, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T., etc., instead of λαλῶ of T.R., which rests on slender authority. Godet prefers it, however.

predictions of the approaching Passion. This foreknowledge of issues is no interference with free self-consciousness in itself. It may imply that the natures thus known contained in themselves the seeds of the future growth. He knew what would be, but he did not compel it. There was possibly some fresh manifestation of feeling, of failing sympathy, even of enmity, which led the evangelist to notice the manner and interpret the mind of the Lord.

Ver. 65.—And he said, For this cause have I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of the Father (*μὴν* is omitted by R.T. and Tischendorf (8th edit.); the authorities seem here more equally divided); see notes on vers. 37 and 44. Christ has come completely round to the fundamental principles with which he started. The coming to him, the believing on him, the spiritual apprehension of his Divine humanity, the adoring acceptance of his precious blood, the reception of the spiritual life-giving energy which went forth from him in word, depended on the Father's "drawing"—on those fundamental characteristics of appetite and capacity to receive the grace of Christ which are subjective and are referrible to the Father's good pleasure. Christ does not give the hunger, but the bread. From the beginning he saw the presence of the appetite after that which he came to bestow. Sometimes a morbid absence of all hunger, a moribund cessation of thirst, may be and is transformed into passionate and life-saving eagerness by the sight of food. The Father gives both the hunger and the food, the sense of need and the heavenly supply. The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, is the drawing of the Father through the Son to himself. The drawing of the Father is the giving of souls to the Son. A fresh thought is here added. This drawing, thus interpreted, is God's gift also to the human soul. The question arises—If the Lord knew, why did he choose the traitor, or call Judas into the innermost circle (see ver. 71)?

Ver. 66.—Upon this (*ἐκ τούτων*; cf. *ἐξ' οὗ*, equivalent to *qua propter*). Not "from that time forwards," not a gradual thinning down or departure of some disciples, one to-day and another to-morrow, but a kind of rush and stampede took place. Those who a few hours before were ready to call him their Messianic King, were entirely disenchanted. The claims of Christ were so profoundly different from what they anticipated that upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. The fascination those felt who had seen some of the excellences of Jesus led them to put themselves at his disposal, to wait upon him, to desert their ordinary occupations. Hence

part of the phraseology of redemption was derived from the method of Christ. Men "came" to him; they "followed" him; they "walked" with him; they could "go back," desert, forsake their Lord. These actions of his first disciples have created the vocabulary of the kingdom of God. Christ's teaching tested as well as attracted men. There was a repellent force as well as an infinite fascination. He sifted as well as saved. The very deeds and words that broke some hearts into penitence roused impatient and angry remonstrance in others. There is seen in this Gospel a continual departure and a deepening faith.

Vers. 67—71.—(b) *The loyalty of the twelve, with a note of prophetic warning.*

Ver. 67.—Jesus therefore said unto the twelve. He spake to them because of the wide defection from his ranks. "The twelve" have never been mentioned before in the Gospel, but this passing reference reveals acquaintance with the fact on the part of the evangelist. He assumes the historic number as perfectly explicable to his readers. The reference to the *twelve* baskets in ver. 13 almost presupposes that there were the same number of disciples, and this pathetic appeal is in harmony with the synoptic account of their "call." Would ye also go away? *Μὴ θέλετε* suggests a negative answer, "Ye cannot wish, can you?" (Meyer). Godet says, on the contrary, "If you wish, you can!" Westcott, "The form of the question implies that such desertion is incredible, and yet to be feared" (cf. ch. vii. 47, 52; xviii. 17, 25). The question is far from identical with that query which once more the Lord put to the twelve, after many subsequent months of varied activity and critical discourse, which showed how Jesus had at length broken with the narrow literalism of Judaic privilege. On that occasion he was summing up the varied convictions produced upon the Galilæan multitudes, and he asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Here he is simply suggesting the possibility, but yet the incredibility, of his desertion by the twelve apostles, merely because he had affirmed the spiritual aims of his entire mission, and had made an unreserved offer of his Divine humanity to their need. The pathos of this inquiry shows how serious a crisis was being enacted. It has reference in its issues rather to himself than to the twelve. The critical school see in this verse the Johannine treatment of the great apostolic confession, and Weiss here agrees with it. Even Godet thinks that two such questions with their answers, under comparatively similar conditions, are improbable. He suggests that the *ἐκ τούτων* (ver. 66) points to a great scattering, and that months may have elapsed before the scene

which John here condenses. It is more likely that John omits the later scene, and prefers to give this, which stands closely related with the immediate circumstances (cf. also Luke ix.). The context and surrounding of the scene in Matt. xvi. 13—17 and Mark viii. 27—29 appear to differ in place, occasion, query, and answer, and in the corresponding teaching that followed. The question was “the anticipation of Gethsemane” (Edersheim).

Vers. 68, 69.—Simon Peter—prominent here, and in ch. xiii. 6—11, 24, 36; xviii. 10; xx. 2—10; xxi. 7, etc.; just as he is in the synoptic Gospels (see portrait of St. Peter, Introduction VIII. 3 (4))—[then <sup>1</sup>] answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Perhaps ἀπελευσόμεθα is even stronger than the ὑπάγειν; Hast thou not drawn us to thyself, and supplied a need and craving which thou hadst first of all excited? Is there any teacher to rival thee? Can we look for another while we have thee? “Da nobis alterum te” (Augustine). The second part of this immortal reply points clearly back to ver. 63, where the Lord had declared that the words he had spoken to them were spirit and life. Thou hast words of eternal life. Not “the words,” which would savour too much of the dogmatic and technical, but *words of life*—words which minister the Spirit of life; words which convey the Divine power, even the Holy Spirit, to our minds; words which bring those thoughts before us which we can believe, and believing which, we have eternal life. “Thou hast such words” (cf. for use of ἔχειν, 1 Cor. xiv. 26). The third item of this confession is twofold. We have believed, and have come to know; so that we now do believe and know that, etc. There is a knowledge which precedes belief, and there are some great facts and ideas about Christ which lead to a higher and to a different belief (see ch. xvii. 8; 1 John iv. 8); but again the fullest knowledge follows belief, a notional and real assent leads to an invincible assent. Faith is the womb of assurance. This richer knowledge is mediated by love. “He that loveth not knoweth not,” and the faith that evokes “love” also excites and confirms the “knowledge” that is life eternal (ch. xvii. 2). That thou art the Holy One of God.<sup>2</sup> The recognition of

the nature of the Lord, which fell short of the great utterance of Peter in Matt. xvi. 16. This was an ascription which the *dæmoniæ*, or the devils, by their lips were ready from the first to proclaim prematurely (Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34). (On the holiness of Christ, on his entire consecration, and on the fact that he was sealed and sent into the world to do the Father’s will, see ch. x. 36; 1 John ii. 20; Rev. iii. 7.) “Thou art sent on the highest mission. Thou canst accomplish all that thou hast told us; we have come to believe it, and we do know it. We cannot leave thee. We are not looking for temporal honours or Messianic splendours, but for the food that endureth unto everlasting life.”

Ver. 70.—The answer of the Lord is one of the most solemn and heart-rending character, and a further hint from his own lips of what the evangelist had uttered on his own account. It is an outburst of bitter grief over the moral imperfections which are developing under this strong revelation of the Divine glory. Did I not choose—I, even I the Holy One of God—you the twelve to myself (ἐξελεξάμην), and of you one is a devil? This “choice” is repeatedly referred to (ch. xiii. 18; xv. 16; cf. Luke vi. 13; Acts i. 2, 24). “He appointed twelve to be with him, that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to cast out *dæmons*” (Mark iii. 14). This choice was made in the full human self-consciousness and knowledge of their peculiarities. It is morally inconceivable that he, in his Divine foreknowledge, chose Judas to special reprobation, knowing him then to be devilish in his nature, and so that he might have his character demoralized by this close contact with Christ’s holiness, and thus be trained for the damnation of the traitor’s sin and doom. Yet this choice, to Christ’s human nature and self-consciousness, was early seen to be one which was not softening but hardening the heart of Judas. He brought him nearer to himself, and gave him fresh opportunity of acquiring just ideas of the kingdom and its methods, and by these warnings the Lord was giving him chance after chance of escaping from what, even to the Lord’s prophetic human foresight, looked like his destiny. “One of you,” says he—“one is devil.” Official re-

<sup>1</sup> Οὗν of T.R. is omitted by nine principal uncials and numerous versions, by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, R.T. It has the authority of E, F, H, M, Vulgate, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The text of T.R. is that of the great mass of later manuscripts and versions, but it appears highly probable that it was transferred here from Matt. xvi. 16. The older manuscripts, N, B, O\*, D, L, give δ *ἅγιος*

τοῦ Θεοῦ. Some of the early versions give δ *Χριστός* δ *ἅγιος* τοῦ Θεοῦ. The Latin translations, δ *Χριστός* δ *υἱὸς* τοῦ Θεοῦ. These seem a gradual approximation to the full text of Matt. xvi., and of the bulk of cursives, etc., which is δ *Χριστός* δ *υἱὸς* τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὧν *ἡμεῖς*. Tregelles, R.T., Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, and Godet adopt the shorter reading.

lation to me is not salvation. Even the admission that I am the Holy One of God is not eternal life. We may compare Christ's severe rebuke to Peter, when, after the grand confession (Matt. xvi. 16), he counted himself worthy to disapprove the methods of his Lord's mercy, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence to me; thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." Judas did far worse—he wanted to use the Divine power of his Master for his own personal ends.

Vor. 71.—Now he spake concerning Judas the son of Simon the Iscariot<sup>1</sup> being one of

<sup>1</sup> The reading Ἰσκαριώτου for Ἰσκαριώτην justifies this translation; it is that of N<sup>c</sup>, B, C, G, L, Π, and is preferred by Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T., and Bengel; but Meyer and Godet

the twelve. (For this use of ἔλεγε, see ch. ix. 19; Mark xiv. 71.) *Iscariot* is most probably "of Kerieth," a town of Judah, mentioned in Josh. xv. 25, though Westcott cites another Kerieth in Moab (Jer. xlviii. 44). If this Kerieth, which Simon and his son Judas have degraded, be the Kerieth-Hezron, then it would seem that Judas was the only *Judas* among the apostles. For he it was that was about to betray him being one of the twelve (cf. ver. 64). Ὁ παραδόντων gives a somewhat different turn of description to the futurity of the deed. Had it yet fully dawned on the soul of the traitor? Had he laid any plans to bring his Master to the point from which he turned so divinely? We know not.

prefer the other text, as N reads, ἀπὸ καρυώτου as the -ην is the reading of eleven uncials.

## HOMILETICS.

Vers. 1—15.—*The miracle of the loaves and fishes.* The scene of our Lord's ministry changes once more to Galilee, where he remains for the next seven months. Large multitudes followed him on account of his miracles—"because they saw the miracles which he did on them which were diseased."

I. THE SCENE OF THE NEW MIRACLE. 1. *It was, as Luke tells us, at a "city called Bethsaida,"* that is, Bethsaida Julias, in Gaulonitis, on the north-east of the sea of Galilee. 2. *It was along the slopes of the mountain that closes round the lake.* "Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples." 3. *It was a thoroughly secluded district,* far from the stir of human life, and therefore well fitted to prepare the multitudes for the solemn lessons they were about to receive; for we are told by the synoptists that the miracle followed a day of teaching and healing.

II. THE OCCASION OF THIS MIRACLE. 1. *It occurred near the time of the Passover.* "And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." This was the only feast of the sort that our Lord failed to attend, on account of the increasing hostility of the Jews. 2. *It occurred during a temporary withdrawal of Jesus from society,* caused by the news of the death of John the Baptist, and by the need of rest after the exhausting labour of his disciples in their first missionary tour.

III. THE COMPASSION OF JESUS FOR THE MULTITUDE. 1. *They had travelled afoot "out of all the cities,"* many of them long distances, to see our Lord. 2. *They were, in our Lord's eyes, as "sheep without a shepherd,"* and therefore "he was moved with compassion toward them" (Mark vi. 34). 3. *They had remained a whole day in "the desert,"* and would be sure to faint on their way back, if they departed without food. How considerate is our Lord for the physical wants of men!

IV. MARK HOW HE PREPARES THE DISCIPLES FOR SUPPLYING THE WANTS OF THE MULTITUDE. "He saith to Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" 1. *He makes the disciples feel the inadequacy of their resources for the work in hand.* They had but five loaves and a few fishes; and Andrew might well say, "What are these among so many?" The sense of an inadequacy is often the beginning of Divine strength. 2. *He makes the disciples carry their inadequate resources to himself.* "Bring them hither to me," as Matthew reports.

V. MARK THE ORDER PURSUED IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FOOD. "Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand." There is something moral in the idea of order or arrangement. It implies an economy of effort as conducive to a practical result. 1. *He distributes the food by means of the disciples.* "He gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." Thus the Lord feeds the hungering

world by means of his Church. Let us all learn our high vocation and our solemn responsibilities. 2. *He takes his place at the head of the "table spread in the wilderness," as Father of the family; for "he gave thanks" before the distribution.*

VI. THE MIRACULOUS MULTIPLICATION OF THE BREAD AND THE FISHES. 1. *The disciples might doubtingly and sparingly begin to distribute*, but they would find each one's portion increase in his hands, till group after group was provided. 2. *The people "were filled."* The satisfaction of appetite was an undoubted fact. How clearly this food symbolizes the Bread of Life as adapted for the whole race of man!

VII. MARK THE ECONOMY SUGGESTED BY OUR LORD'S COMMAND. "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." 1. *A gift so precious and obtained so mysteriously was not to be wasted.* 2. *Our Lord gathered the fragments, perhaps, for the use of his disciples in coming days.*

VIII. EFFECT OF THE MIRACLE ON THE MULTITUDE. 1. *They recognize him as a Prophet of God; for they said, "This is of a truth that Prophet that cometh into the world."* 2. *They are prepared to recognize him as King of Israel.* "Jesus therefore, perceiving that they were about to draw near and seize him to make him King, withdrew again to the mountain alone." 3. *They imagined he was the destined Deliverer of Israel from the Roman yoke, and were prepared to support his claims to a temporal monarchy.* 4. *Our Lord anticipated, and therefore prevented their design by withdrawing from the crowd.* 5. *He passed the night, as the synoptists tell us, in prayer, on the mountain, after this day of exhausting toil and effort. Prayer restores the vigour of the wearied spirit.*

Vers. 16—21.—*Christ walking on the sea.* Our Lord had sent the disciples across to Capernaum, to detach them from the influence of the excited multitude.

I. THE DISCIPLES EXPOSED TO DANGER ON THE LAKE. "And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea was agitated by a great wind that blew." 1. *The sea of Galilee was often exposed to dangerous storms.* 2. *The darkness of the night must have intensified the fears of the disciples.* 3. *The absence of Jesus must have made them feel their helplessness.* 4. *They were not relieved till the danger had reached its highest point.* The boat had now reached the middle of the lake; "they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty stadia." As it was about six miles across, the boat was therefore in the middle of the lake.

II. CHRIST'S SUDDEN INTERVENTION. "They see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid." 1. *Nothing will keep Christ from his people in their hour of danger.* 2. *He is superior to winds and waves.* He can walk on the surface of the water; he can still the winds. 3. *The words of Jesus still the fears of his people.* "It is I; be not afraid." His gracious presence supports us in all risks and in all afflictions. 4. *The willingness of the disciples to receive Jesus in their distress.* "Then they were willing to receive him into the ship." How dear he is in the hours of our loneliness, our desertion, our helplessness! 5. *Jesus does not leave his disciples till he sees them in absolute safety.* "And immediately the ship was at the land whither they were going."

Vers. 22—29.—*The dialogue between Jesus and the Jews in the synagogue of Capernaum.* The multitude followed our Lord on the following day across to Capernaum.

I. JESUS DISCLOSES TO THEM THE SELFISH MOTIVES THAT GOVERNED THEIR CONDUCT. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of those loaves, and were filled." 1. *Jesus knew the hearts of men.* 2. *He exposes their inward character with an unshrinking boldness.* 3. *How seldom is Christ sought for his own sake!* The Jews followed him for selfish ends, for mere worldly advantage. Lange says, "Instead of seeing in the bread the sign, in the sign they beheld only the bread." Their search after Jesus, therefore, had a pre-eminently unspiritual character.

II. JESUS DIRECTS THEM TO THE TRUE WAY OF SEEKING HIM. "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which endureth in life eternal." 1. *He does not counsel any neglect of the due discharge of our daily calling.* All men must work for "the meat that perisheth." "If any man will not work, neither let him eat."

Yet the best things of this life are fading and perishing. 2. *He proclaims the essential superiority and indispensableness of "the food which endureth in life eternal."* (1) This is a permanent principle of life; it is eternal life itself. (2) We are to work for it; not that our salvation is of works, but our work is limited to the appropriation of the gift offered for our acceptance. Our work would be in vain without this gift. Faith supplies all that is involved in this gift. (3) It is the gift of Jesus—"which the Son of man shall give unto you." We are saved entirely by grace. Jesus grants faith and repentance, and through these all the blessings of redemption. (4) Jesus is specially consecrated to this work—"for him hath the Father, God, sealed." (a) The Father appointed him to be the Saviour of his people; (b) he approved him by the Spirit's descent upon him, and a voice from heaven declared him to be his beloved Son; (c) he sealed him as such by miraculous signs. What security for his salvation is thus possessed by every believer!

III. THE HUMAN SIGN IN THE ACT OF SALVATION. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The Jews asked what works of God should they do as conditions precedent to their receiving this gift. 1. *They were seeking for life, not by faith*, but as it were by the works of the Law. They imagined there was some higher work yet to be done than any commanded by the Law of Moses. 2. *Our Lord points to faith as the only work to be done.* "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." It is the work of God (1) because God demands it; (2) because God gives it; (3) because God approves of it—"without faith it is impossible to please God;" (4) all other works are acceptable only when done in faith—"faith is the life of works; works are the necessity of faith." 3. *Our Lord points to the true Object of faith.* "Him whom he hath sent." (1) It is the Messiah, sent by the Father as Mediator between God and man. (2) Jesus is not only to be an Object of intellectual belief, but of the heart's strongest trust. (3) The faith in question is not to be a mere single act, establishing a contact with the Redeemer, but a continuous state of faith.

Vers. 30—33.—*The nature of the gift from heaven.* The Jews demanded "a sign from heaven."

I. THEIR DEMAND FOR A FRESH MIRACLE. "What sign then dost thou do, that we may see, and believe in thee? what dost thou work?" 1. *They thought they were entitled to demand a fresh miracle*, much in advance of the miracle at Bethsaida Julias; because that was, after all, not so remarkable as the miracle of the manna in the wilderness. "Our fathers did not eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He did give them bread from heaven to eat." 2. *They still evidently understood the higher benefit promised by our Lord as material, and not spiritual.* 3. *They meant, by their seeing and believing in Christ, to reduce faith to a mere matter of sight*—a mere belief of truth in the testimony of their senses. They were quite unspiritual in their conceptions.

II. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO THEIR DEMAND. He corrects their misapprehensions. 1. *He asserts that it was not Moses, but God, who fed the people with manna.* "Moses gave you not the bread from heaven." It was a truly Divine work to feed two millions of people in the desert from day to day. Therefore there could be no comparison between Moses and Christ. 2. *He asserts that the Bread he speaks of is not material, but spiritual.* "But my Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is he who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." (1) Mark how gradually our Lord passes from figure to reality. The Jews think of bread like manna; Jesus speaks of himself, though he has not yet directly done so. (2) The Bread from heaven was true Bread, because it satisfied the deepest wants of man's nature. It had true life-giving, life-upholding virtue. 3. *It was continuous in its supply of man's wants.* "It cometh down from heaven." 4. *It was not limited to one people, but offered to the whole race of man.* The age of Jewish particularism was past.

Vers. 34—40.—*The divergence between the thoughts of Jesus and those of the Jews.* A rupture was clearly at hand. The people had hopes of merely material blessing.

I. THE JEWS ASK FOR THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN. "Lord, evermore give us this bread." 1. *They ask for a continuous supply of it.* 2. *Their demand betrays a*

*carnal spirit*, that speaks of either sensual want, or covetousness, or the spirit of idleness; for no more labour would be expended upon the production of food.

II. JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF PLAINLY AS THE BREAD OF LIFE. "I am the Bread of life." 1. *He represents himself as the Sustainer of the life he communicates*; for he is that "Eternal Life which was in the beginning with the Father" (1 John i. 2). He thus presents the objective side of salvation. 2. *Faith is the condition of its reception*. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (1) Faith as a coming suggests its more active aspect. (2) Faith as a believing its more restful aspect. 3. *This Bread will bring the full satisfaction of all wants*. The receptive spirit will have no desire for any other food than Christ. It will have (1) strength from the food, and (2) peace from the appeasing of the thirst.

III. JESUS PLAINLY DECLARES THE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS. "But I said unto you, Ye have seen me, and yet ye believe not." 1. *They had asked to see, and their desire had been fully gratified*. 2. *Yet they refused to believe in him*. An impression exists that if men could see Christ they should all surely believe in him. The Jews saw him from day to day, witnessed his miracles, heard his words, and yet were none the better for that immediate experience. We enjoy the higher blessing. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

IV. YET JESUS DECLARES THE ULTIMATE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS FATHER'S WILL, IN THE FACE OF JEWISH UNBELIEF. "All that the Father giveth me shall reach me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." 1. *He declares the Divine purpose*, in virtue of which "all that the Father giveth"—his seed, his spouse, his Church, his inheritance—shall be everlastingly saved. They will surely reach the Saviour. 2. *He declares at once the subjective side of this salvation, and his attitude as a Redeemer* toward those who come to him as their Refuge. He will in no wise cast them out of (1) his love; (2) his arms; (3) his Church; (4) his glory. 3. *The security for the salvation of all who come to him*. "For this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." (1) Christ has no separate will from his Father. (2) The Father's will has a double aspect; it respects (a) the delivery of his people from destruction; (b) their restoration into the transfigured manhood of the resurrection. 4. *The further confirmation of this security*. "For this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." The previous verse presented the objective, this verse presents the subjective, side of this blessed truth. (1) Men must see Christ in order to obtain everlasting life. They are naturally blind. The Spirit opens their eyes that they may see, not merely themselves, their sin, their helplessness; but Christ, his righteousness, his peace, his grace, his salvation. (2) Men must trust in him to obtain everlasting life. There must be an actual reliance upon Christ. (3) The end is everlasting life; not mere escape from hell, or the absence of loss. (4) It is resurrection in glory. Christ will be the efficient Cause, as he is the Firstfruits of the resurrection.

Vers. 41—51.—*Our Lord's explanation of Jewish unbelief*. A rupture was clearly near at hand.

I. THE MURMURING OF THE JEWS. "The Jews then murmured concerning him, because he said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven." It sprang: 1. *Partly from doubt*. (Ch. vii. 12.) 2. *Partly from contemptuous surprise*. 3. *Partly from dissatisfaction*.

II. THE GROUND OF THEIR MURMURING. "And they said, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" 1. *The Jews of Capernaum must have been personally acquainted with the humble family at Nazareth, which was not far distant*. 2. *They did not know of the miraculous conception of Jesus, which was yet concealed in the heart of Mary, and was not to be revealed till after his resurrection*. 3. *The miracles that Jesus wrought could not undo the impression made upon their minds by the circumstances of his familiar life at Nazareth*. He was still, notwithstanding all his miracles, but the carpenter's Son.

III. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO THEIR MURMURED DISSATISFACTION. 1. *He attributes it to their incapacity to understand his saying*. Their moral condition explained their ignorance. 2. *He emphasizes the necessity of a Divine influence to work faith in their*



*hearts.* "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (1) The reason is that men are naturally in a state of alienation and darkness, at once estranged from God by their "carnal enmity," and unable to see the true Light. (2) Faith is God's gift (Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 23). (3) The attracting power of the Father is (a) not mere moral suasion. (b) It is nothing merely arbitrary. (c) It has no compulsory efficacy; for, as Bernard says, "No man is saved against his will." (d) It is something distinct from the power of doctrine or miracles. (e) It is that influence which makes a sinner willing in the day of God's power (Ps. cx. 3), enlightening his understanding, renewing his will, and alluring his heart by the power of his grace. "He draws with the bands of love." (4) Yet there is a human side to the process by which sinners are drawn to Christ. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (a) The teaching which is contained in the writings of Moses (vers. 46, 47) and the Word of God in general (ver. 38) discloses sin, and makes the sinner realize the nothingness of his own righteousness. (b) The teaching enables us to learn concerning the Father's love, grace, and mercy, so that the sinner is led to commit his soul to Christ. (c) This teaching, however precious, is not immediate. "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." (a) We are bound, notwithstanding, to believe in the revelation of the unseen Father just as we rejoice, believingly, in the unseen Saviour (1 Pet. i. 8). (b) Because that revelation reaches us through him who is a sharer in Deity, "who is of God." (5) Christ makes a further advance in his teaching. (a) He repeats several truths. (a) The connection between faith and eternal life. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." (b) The fact that he is himself the Bread of life. (γ) The fact that their fathers were fed on the manna, and yet died. (δ) The life-giving properties of the true manna that "cometh down from heaven." (b) And then he explains its life-giving properties. "And the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (a) This refers, not to his incarnation, but to his atoning death, for he speaks of the gift as still future. (β) The design or application of the gift. "For the life of the world." There is here no narrow particularism. His life was to be sacrificed for the salvation of the world.

Vers. 52—59.—*The increasing difficulties of Jewish unbelief.* The further teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum only developed the more decidedly the unbelieving temper of the Galileans.

I. THE STRIFE AMONG THE JEWS. "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can he give us his flesh to eat?" 1. *Some of them evidently were in his favour, and understood his words in their true sense*; but the majority were as evidently opposed to him. 2. *Those who are carnally minded are apt to put a wrong sense upon the words of life, to their own undoing.* 3. *Yet our Lord does not alter his words to meet the moral difficulties present to their minds.*

II. CONSIDER HOW OUR LORD DEALS WITH THEIR QUESTION. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Here he gives his explanation, first in a negative, then in a positive form, to the effect that the atoning obedience of Christ is the cause of life to men (Rom. v. 18). He had first connected the life with his Person; he now connects it with his work. 1. *Our Lord does not, as some imagine, refer here to the Lord's Supper*, (1) because this ordinance had not then been instituted, and the Jews could not possibly have understood his reference to it; (2) because it is not true to say that every one who partakes of the Lord's Supper either has or shall have eternal life; (3) and Roman Catholics, who insist upon this interpretation of the text, are not consistent, by denying the cup to the laity, though "drinking his blood" is expressly declared to be as essential to life as "eating his flesh." 2. *He does not refer these words to his doctrine, or his system of ethics, or his example.* Such an interpretation is exceedingly shallow. 3. *He does not refer to the Incarnation, as the sole channel for the communication of life*, according to those who hold the mystical theory of the atonement, as if his death were the mere climax of his dedication to God, and not a true sacrifice for sin. 4. *He refers, in these expressive words, to his atoning death on Calvary, of which the Paschal lamb was but*

the shadow. With their awe of blood, the Jews would think it strange to hear Jesus assert the necessity of drinking his blood; but the strangeness disappears when he virtually says to them, "I am the Substance or Reality of that type." (1) Consider the import of the life that is thus imparted to the sinner. (a) It presupposes men as without life, as alienated from the life of God (Eph. iv. 18), because they have not the love of God in them (ch. v. 42). (b) It is something freely provided and bestowed by God. (c) It is eternal in its nature, incapable of break or interruption, finding its completeness in the final resurrection of the body. (2) This life, so far from being an absolute or unpurchased gift, is secured through the atoning obedience of Christ. The Prince of Life submits to death; he gives his flesh for the life of the world. The words point to a priestly act of oblation (Eph. v. 2). (3) This life is received through faith. Our Lord uses the terms "eating his flesh" and "drinking his blood" as interchangeable with believing in him (vers. 35, 40, 47). The terms imply that sinners are to receive Christ, as a hungry man partakes of food. Thus the atonement becomes not merely a divine expedient for man's salvation, but a profound personal necessity. 5. *The crucified flesh of Christ is the essential food of the immortal soul.* "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." The reason is that the food of the old sacrifices was only the type of which Christ crucified was the transcendent reality. 6. *Explanation of the life-giving virtue of Christ's flesh and blood.* "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him." This implies a union of the closest kind. (1) Believers dwell in the heart of Christ as in a place of refuge and rest. (2) Christ dwells in the heart of believers by faith (Eph. iii. 17)—a wonderful instance of condescension on the part of our Divine Redeemer. This indwelling secures to the believer all that is Christ's. 7. *The true ground of the common life of Christ and believers.* "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me." (1) Jesus himself has access to the Source of life; (a) for he has his life by the Father, and (b) has been sent by the Father, who is the Fountain of life. (2) Thus the believer who feeds on Jesus lives upon the Father himself. "The true God, the living Father, gives himself to One alone, but in him to all who feed upon this only One." (3) Thus is realized the great mystery of the gospel—"the gathering together of all things in one" (Eph. i. 10). 8. *Jesus now reaches the climax of his revelation to the Jews,* for he tells them plainly that death or life hangs upon their acceptance or rejection of himself. "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." 9. *The scene of this long discourse.* "Jesus said these things, teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum." Modern exploration has identified Tell-Hâm as the site of Capernaum, and brings to light the ruins of an ancient synagogue, in which has been found a block of stone with the pot of manna engraved upon its face. The discovery suggests that the Jews as well as Christ may have seen this very stone.

Vers. 60—65.—*The growth of discontent and unbelief among his disciples.* The burden of this teaching was too heavy to be borne, even by those disciples who followed Jesus for a time, without realizing the true conditions of discipleship.

I. THE TRIAL OF THEIR FAITH. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" 1. *The saying was hard, not in the sense of being obscure, but offensive to their judgment.* 2. *The ground of offence was not* (1) the bloody death of the Messiah; (2) nor the assumption on the part of Jesus that the salvation of the world was linked with his Person; (3) nor his claim to have come down from heaven; (4) but the statement of the paramount need of their eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man. To their vulgar perception it was repugnant to the moral sense.

II. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO THEIR MURMURED DISCONTENT. "Doth this offend you? What then if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before?" 1. *The words refer to his ascension up to heaven after death.* 2. *It would then be manifest in what sense they would eat his flesh,* for it would be impossible to eat it, in their gross sense, after his ascension to glory. 3. *The words imply Christ's previous existence in heaven.* 4. *Explanation of the nature of the life-giving principle.* "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." (1) Jesus asserts that the life-giving principle is not in the material substance of the flesh, which would,

indeed, after the ascension, be beyond the reach of man. (2) The great reality was the forthcoming Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit. (a) Thus the second Adam becomes a quickening Spirit (1 Cor. xv. 45). (b) Thus the words that Jesus speaks "are spirit and life," that is, they are "the pure incarnation of the Spirit and the vehicle of life."

III. YET SOME ARE INACCESSIBLE TO THIS LIFE-GIVING INFLUENCE BY THEIR UNBELIEF. "But there are some of you that believe not." 1. *They were, perhaps, but a small portion of his disciples.* 2. *Yet their unbelief was no surprise to one gifted with omniscience.* "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray him." 3. *The explanation of their unbelief.* "Therefore I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." (1) It is impossible to understand the interaction of the will of God and the will of man in salvation; (2) yet our Lord asserts plainly that, as faith is God's gift, the salvation of man depends upon his efficacious grace.

Vers. 66—71.—*The crisis reached at last.* The Galilæan disciples, in many cases, revolted against Christ's teaching.

I. THE DEFECTION IN GALILÆE. "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." 1. *These disciples returned once more to the world, with its old occupations, and to the religious guidance of the scribes and Pharisees.* 2. *They ceased to attend upon our Lord's ministry, or to follow him from place to place in his errands of truth and mercy.* 3. *The cause of their defection was their unbelief.* "There are some of you which believe not." (1) There are many persons who profess to be Christ's disciples for a time, and afterwards fall away from their profession. (2) Though Jesus foresaw this defection, it must have been a bitter disappointment.

II. OUR LORD'S TOUCHING APPEAL TO THE TWELVE. "Will ye also go away?" 1. *Though he has suffered from the sudden thinning of the ranks of his disciples, he yet holds open the door for the chosen twelve to follow them if they are so inclined.* 2. *Yet such an additional defection would have added immensely to his trial, as the apostles were nearer to him than the Galilæan disciples.* 3. *Our Lord seeks to find a small company of true disciples, as the last support of his word, who would be impregnable against apostasy.*

III. PETER'S PROMPT AND FERVENT ANSWER. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." 1. *The answer is characteristic of the apostle's impulsive nature;* for he does not take the trouble to inquire whether it represents the convictions or feelings of all his colleagues. 2. *The answer recognized the impossibility of the return of the apostles:* (1) Either to the guidance of the scribes and Pharisees, who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and were blind leaders of the blind; (2) or to the Law of Moses, by which there was neither life nor righteousness. 3. *It recognized the essential fitness of Christ to be the Teacher of the apostles.* (1) He had words of eternal life. (a) Either promises of eternal life made before the world began, and put into Christ's hands; (b) or the doctrines of eternal life, which exhibit the way of salvation through a crucified Saviour. (2) The ground of this conviction. "We believe and know that thou art Christ, the Holy One of God." (a) The belief is first, as it is the foundation of a right understanding, while the right understanding distinguishes the belief from mere opinion. (b) The confession, strangely recalling that of the demoniacs (Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34), was the recognition of Christ as God's Son, sealed unto the work of giving his life for the world.

IV. OUR LORD'S DISCLOSURE OF THE SECRET CHARACTER OF ONE OF HIS APOSTLES. "Have I not chosen you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" 1. *The choice is to apostleship, not to salvation.* (Luke vi. 13.) 2. *Our Lord sees the truly devilish character of one apostle through all disguises.* Judas was (1) a deceiver, (2) a liar, (3) a murderer. 3. *It is a significant fact that Judas was, unlike the eleven disciples, who were all Galilæans, a native of Judæa.* "He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon." He belonged to the village of Kerieth, in Judæa (Josh. xv. 25). The betrayer of our Lord belonged to that Judæa where the hostilities of the Jews reached its highest point. 4. *Our Lord makes the apostles aware of the character of Judas, partly that he may prepare them for the coming betrayal—"for he it was that should*

betray him"—partly to convince them that they could only stand steadfast in their faith and allegiance by reliance on his grace.

### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 20.—"*It is I!*" They who endure many evils, anticipate more; they are bowed down; and every touch, however kindly, seems a blow to smite them, and to thrust them lower still. When the apostles were tossed on the stormy waters of the lake, and almost despaired of deliverance, Jesus himself drew nigh. But the presence of their best Friend affrighted them. Only his voice could soothe the terror which his presence roused. There is no voice which can rise above the storms of life, to soothe the spirit and to hush the turmoil, save the voice of Christ. What, then, is the import of his reassuring declaration, "It is I"?

I. IT IS I WHO WATCH. Although the disciples did not know it, their Master was, from the neighbouring height, by the fitful moonbeams, watching the little vessel as she struggled with the tempest. He knew exactly how matters were with his friends, and, when he came down from the height, he knew where to find the storm-tossed boat. So does he ever watch his people's course over the waters of life, and with especial interest when that course is one of peril.

II. IT IS I WHO LINGER AND DELAY. Although Jesus knew the state of his disciples, he did not at once come to the rescue. He *waited*, perhaps to try their faith, and to make his interposition the more welcome. Often do Christ's people fancy that their Lord is careless of their state of anxiety, alarm, or danger. But they are mistaken. He has his own reasons for delay.

III. IT IS I WHO LOVE. Christ's kindness may not always show itself just in the way which would be acceptable to us. Yet his kindness shall not depart from his own; he has loved them with an everlasting love. If there is one time when, more than at another, his heart yearns over his beloved ones, that time is the season of affliction, calamity, and apprehension.

IV. IT IS I WHO COME. At the right moment Jesus drew near. The "voice of the Beloved" was heard above the storm, assuring the distressed disciples that he was near. And his very presence brought comfort and confidence to the heart. Christ comes to his needy and afflicted ones—those "tossed with tempest, and not comforted." His language is, "Fear not; I am with thee: be not dismayed; I am thy God."

V. IT IS I WHO SAVE. He is the Lord of nature, and all nature's powers are, like the storm, subject to his control. He is the Friend of man, and every heart may be reached by his sympathy and cheered by his encouragement. He is the Son of God, and as such he can bring the souls he has redeemed from the depths of earthly danger and of fear into the calm of heavenly security and peace.

"If Thou wert less than One Divine,  
My soul would be dismayed;  
But through thy human lips God *says*,  
"Tis I; be not afraid!"

T.

Ver. 24.—"*Seeking Jesus.*" The Lord Jesus came to earth to *seek* and to save that which was lost. And again and again in the course of his ministry he was sought by those whom he was seeking. There were periods of popularity when, from various motives, the multitudes resorted to the Prophet of Nazareth. Their seeking Jesus was emblematical of the conduct becoming in all men, when Christ comes nigh to them in the messages of his Word and the ordinances of his Church.

I. SEEKING JESUS IMPLIES NEEDING JESUS. Men do not seek what they do not want. The soul that is without Christ, and has a perception of its destitution and need, is urged to go in quest of him. Men may have health, luxury, wealth, learning, fame; yet if they are without him who is the Son of God, and who brings God near to man, they are strangers to the highest good which we are capable of partaking. If there be any spiritual awakening, then the actual need becomes a *conscious* want, and the pressure of spiritual indigence urges to undertake this spiritual quest and pilgrimage.

II. SEEKING JESUS IS PROMPTED BY PRIZING JESUS. He is the Treasure hidden in the field, he is the costly Pearl; they who recognize him as such are constrained to use every endeavour to make him their own. Since to find him is to find all spiritual blessings—forgiveness of sin, help for duty, fellowship with heaven, and life eternal—it is natural enough that those who understand and feel this should set a high value upon Christ, and should seek him with all their heart.

III. SEEKING JESUS IS CREDITING AND HONOURING JESUS. It is his wish to be sought, nay, it is his command that men should seek him. There is, therefore, no presumption in this attitude and action of the soul; it is just what the Lord himself expects and desires from us. He will neither hide himself from those who seek him, nor will he repel and dismiss them from his presence. For, in coming to him, they take him at his word, and render to him the honour which is his due.

IV. SEEKING JESUS INVOLVES TRUSTING AND LOVING JESUS. They who earnestly, patiently, persistently seek the Lord, are drawn to him growingly by the bonds of a Divine attraction. The closer they keep to him, the stronger grows their faith, the warmer grows their love.

V. SEEKING JESUS LEADS TO FINDING JESUS. His own word of assurance is ample warrant for this: "Seek, and ye shall find." Many good things may be sought with diligence, and by a lifelong search, and yet may be sought in vain. Of the best of all blessings this cannot be said. "*Every one that seeketh findeth.*"

APPLICATION. Here is a picture of the action which is becoming to every one to whom the gospel comes. It is not enough to admire the character of Jesus and to approve his work. Our will, our active nature, must be engaged in the effort to attain and to enjoy him. And we have this promise to cheer us: "Seek, and ye shall find."—T.

Ver. 27.—*Fruitless and fruitful toil.* Our Lord's miracles did not end in themselves. Out of them there often grew interviews, conversations, and discourses of the greatest interest and profit. Such was the case with the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. The provision made for their bodily wants prompted the people to resort in numbers to the Prophet of Nazareth. And thus our Lord had the opportunity, which he did not fail to use, of presenting to the multitudes, upon the suggestion of the miracle he had wrought, lessons, reflections, expostulations, and appeals of vast and lasting value. Especially did he put in a true light the relative claims of the body and the soul upon the attention and the endeavours of mankind.

I. AN ERROR REBUKED; *i.e.* the very common habit of living and working merely for the sake of the supply of bodily wants. Our Lord's words have sometimes been misunderstood. He could not have intended to reprove poor men for labouring hard in order to secure an honest living for themselves and their families. What was it, then, which he so gravely reprehended? It must have been the concentration of all human interest and effort upon the existence and comfort of the body, upon the securing an abundance of material good, upon the attainment of opulence and the enjoyment of luxury. Such a course of life may be termed an idolatry of the body and of this passing earthly life. How many there are who pursue with all the energy of their nature the so-called "good things of this life," forgetful that these things are destined to perish and to pass away! To such the ancient admonition of the prophet is applicable, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?"

II. AN EFFORT ENJOINED; *i.e.* the earnest endeavour to obtain spiritual provision. 1. Our Lord here gives a very striking and just representation of himself. He is "the Bread of life." Knowledge of him, fellowship with him, feed, nourish, strengthen, and cheer the soul. To know his truth, to feel his love, to do his will,—this is an aim in life worthy of all pursuit, worthy of the nature with which the Creator has endowed us. 2. Our Lord reminds us that "labour"—strenuous and persevering exertion—is necessary in order that we may partake of Christ, and enjoy the advantages of his spiritual fellowship. No mere passive acceptance is sufficient. The spiritual nature comes to appropriate and enjoy the Divine Saviour, through sincere and constant effort, through the study of his character, through growth into his likeness, through devotion to his cause.

III. A MOTIVE PRESENTED; *i.e.* the assurance that this spiritual provision abideth

unto eternal life. Earthly supplies can only satisfy bodily wants. The need and the provision are alike perishable and perishing. But the heavenly Bread is especially provided to feed the immortal soul; and they who eat of it shall never hunger, and shall never die. The living water springs up unto life eternal, and they who drink of this fountain shall never thirst. To the disappointed and the distressed such representations should bring comfort and inspiration. The witness of our Saviour to himself is worthy of all acceptance.

IV. A PROMISE GIVEN; *i.e.* that the Son of man will surely give, to all those who labour to attain it, the satisfying and imperishable food of heaven. If we were convinced of the excellence and the attractiveness of the Bread of God, we might still have no belief in its accessibility to man; and in this case they would be cruel who should dwell upon the advantages of a possession which could never be appropriated. But the very purpose of Christ's mission to earth, of his teaching and miracles, of his sufferings and death, was that he might give himself to the hungering heart of humanity. Never does he turn a deaf ear to those who believingly and humbly approach him with the entreaty, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."—T.

Vers. 28, 29.—*The work of God.* It is not easy to decide what was the spirit in which the Jews took up the admonition of Jesus, "Work not for the meat that perisheth," etc., and upon its suggestion urged the question which called forth our Lord's reply. Probably they had a very imperfect apprehension of the meaning of the words they used, when they asked, "What must we do that we may work the works of God?" yet, as there is no evidence that at this stage they had ill feeling towards Jesus, it is better to assume that their question was not captious but sincere.

I. AN ADMIRABLE INQUIRY. 1. It reveals a noble conception of the higher life of man, which may be justly said to consist in working the work of God. 2. It embodies a worthy aspiration and purpose; for it implies that those who spoke thus believed themselves to be prepared to do whatever needed to be done, in order that by them the work of God might in some measure be accomplished. 3. It is a question which is becoming to all thoughtful students of human life, and to all who desire a law to direct their individual energy. It is too unusual; for whilst there are many, especially amongst the young, who ask—What shall we do to be rich, honoured, powerful, happy? there are few who eagerly inquire how they may work God's work. They who do so in sincerity, with docility, and with the resolution to obey the directions given, are certain to be led aright. For this question, when urged by ardent natures, excites joy, not only in the minds of Christ's ministers, but in the very heart of Christ himself.

II. A MEMORABLE AND DECISIVE REPLY. 1. It is a seeming paradox. Why, when the question was, "What shall we do?" should the answer be, "Believe"? An unexpected response! They who look at the matter superficially are wont to say—Never mind what you *believe*, so that you *do* what is right. But Christ puts faith first. 2. Belief in Christ is obedience, because God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, as the Object of human faith. It is the will of God that men should believe on his Son. It is the supreme moral probation of every man, when Jesus comes to him and demands his faith. Christ points away from many *works* to one *work*. 3. As a matter of fact, belief in Christ is the turning of the soul to righteousness. For this is the means of securing pardon and acceptance, of becoming right with God, and also of securing spiritual strength and guidance for the duties of the earthly life. 4. It is a great moral principle, which the gospel takes up and uses for highest ends, that faith underlies doing. A man's inner convictions determine what his habitual works, his moral life, shall be. Such is the relation between faith and works, as taught by both Paul and James; the one apostle laying stress upon faith, the other upon works, and both pleading the authority of this and other sayings of the great Teacher himself. Believing is the beginning, work is the continuation, of the life; belief is the inner, work is the outer, process; belief is the motive, work the result; belief is the cause, work the effect. The Divine life for man is a work; but it is a work based upon a Divine Person, and it is faith which so bases it, which unites the worker to the living and personal Power.—T.

Ver. 32.—*The true Bread.* From any other than Jesus Christ this language would

have been egotistical in the extreme. Coming from his lips, referring as it did to himself, this declaration is natural enough. For since he was the Son of God, no claim inferior to this would have been just. It is a marvellous metaphor, this, in which our Lord proclaims himself the true Bread, the Bread from heaven, the Bread of God, the Bread of life.

**I. CONSIDER THE HUNGER OF THE SOUL WHICH IS PRESUMED.** The body is dependent upon food for life, health, and strength; and the appetite of hunger prompts to the seeking and partaking of food. There is a correspondence between the hunger that craves and the bread that satisfies; an adaptation of the supply to the necessity. There is a parallel arrangement in the spiritual realm. Man is a weak, dependent, craving being, with an ineradicable desire for the highest good—a desire not to be appeased by earthly provisions. It is a spiritual appetite, which in many is deadened by carnal indulgence, by sinful habit, yet which ever and anon recurs. What a revelation of soul-yearning would there be, could the inner nature and experience of any congregation be exposed to an observer's view!

**II. CONSIDER THE BREAD OF THE SOUL WHICH IS PROVIDED.** 1. Christ, as the true Bread, is the gift of the Father. All the family are dependent upon the liberality and thoughtfulness of the great Father and Benefactor. If "he openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," it is not to be believed that, providing for the lower wants, he will neglect the higher. And, as a matter of fact, he has not done so. 2. Christ is the Bread "from heaven." As such he was prefigured by the manna of the wilderness. This gift is bestowed from the sphere of the spiritual and supernatural, which is thus brought near to our souls. 3. He is the true, the real Bread. There is no hollow pretence in this gift. God is not a Father who, if his son ask bread of him, will give him a stone. He who made the soul of man knows how that soul's wants can be fully and for ever met.

**III. CONSIDER THE SATISFACTION OF THE SOUL WHICH IS SECURED.** 1. Christ is partaken, not by physical eating, but by communion of the spirit with the Saviour. Faith is the means of appropriating the Divine provision. Jesus in this conversation especially warned his disciples of the error into which some of them afterwards fell—the error of confounding carnal with spiritual participation of his body and blood. 2. The result of feeding by faith upon the Bread of life is—satisfaction and gladness, health and vigour of soul, and a life which is immortal. "If a man eat this Bread, he shall live for ever." As the hunger of the Israelites was appeased by the manna, as the hunger of the multitude was appeased by the miraculous multiplication of loaves in the wilderness, so have myriads in every age partaken of the true and spiritual Bread, and have borne witness to its efficacy to satisfy their deepest cravings, and to nourish their spiritual life.—T.

Ver. 44.—*The Father draws the soul to Christ.* We have to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to God, first for giving and sending his Son to be our Saviour, and then for guiding us unto his Son, in order that in fellowship with him we may experience the blessings of salvation. For in these two ways does the Father furnish us with a complete display of his love; in these two ways does he completely secure our highest good.

**I. THE DRAWING OF THE SOUL BY THE FATHER.** 1. *The soul needs to be divinely drawn.* And this because: (1) By reason of sin it is estranged from God, is far from God, is even at enmity with God. (2) There are other attractions, very powerful, and such as men are wont to yield to, which draw man's nature in an opposite direction. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" have great power; and in the case of very many exert that power efficaciously to keep the soul from God, and even to increase the distance by which it is so separated. 2. *The instrumentalities, or spiritual forces, by which the Father draws human souls to Christ.* (1) The presentation of truth adapted to man's intelligence. The next verse brings this agency before us in explicit statement: "They shall be all taught of God." (2) The utterance of moral authority addressing the conscience. Passion and interest may draw men from Christ; duty, with a mighty imperative, bids them approach their Lord and Saviour. (3) Love appeals to the heart of man with mystic power.

"The moon may draw the sea;  
The cloud may stoop from heaven, and take the shape,  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape."

The attraction of Christ's character and life, of his gracious language, and above all of his sacrifice upon the cross, is the mightiest moral force the world has ever felt. "I," said he, "if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto myself." Thus in many ways, adapted by his own wisdom to the nature and circumstances of men, is the Father drawing men unto Christ. 3. *The manner in which the Father draws the soul unto himself.* (1) This attraction is not of a physical, mechanical, forcible kind. Such compulsion would be out of all character, would not harmonize with man's moral freedom. And, indeed, it would not be the drawing of the *soul*. (2) It is a moral, spiritual attraction, in accordance with the nature both of him who draws and of those who are drawn. The Holy Spirit of God is the power to whom we owe the action of those moral constraints which are the chief and most beneficent factors in the moral life of mankind. (3) Mighty though this drawing be, it is for the most part gentle and gradual. Its influence is not always at once apparent; it becomes manifest with the growth of experience and the lapse of time. It is continuous, lasting in the case of many from childhood to old age. (4) The power and efficacy of this agency is not to be disputed. The Father calls, and the child answers. The magnetism is exercised, and the soul flies to the attracting power. The light shines, and the eye turns towards the welcome ray.

II. THE COMING OF THE SOUL TO CHRIST. 1. There is an indispensable condition without which no soul can come to Christ. Christ must first come to the soul. The gospel must be preached, and must be received, for it is the Divine call, which alone can authorize the approach of sinful man to the Holy One and Just. 2. The soul's method in coming. It is easy enough to understand how when Jesus was on earth men came to him; they came actually, bodily, locally. Yet the principle of approach is ever the same; for our Lord said indifferently, "*Come unto me,*" and "*Believe on me.*" The coming of the bodily form was useless apart from spiritual approach, sympathy, and trust. As it is the soul which the Father draws, so it is the soul which, being drawn, finds itself near the Saviour and in fellowship with him. 3. The soul's purpose in coming. It is impelled by conscious need of the Redeemer, as the Prophet, the Priest, the King, divinely appointed. It hopes to find in him that full satisfaction which, sought elsewhere, is sought in vain. 4. The soul's experience in coming. (1) There is welcome and acceptance; for he who comes is never, in any wise, cast out. (2) There is a perfect response to the desire and need. The hungry is fed, the thirsty finds the water of life, the weary meets with rest, and the man who longs to serve has revealed to him the law and rule of consecration. (3) There is the eternal abiding; for the soul that comes to Jesus neither leaves him, nor is left by him. 5. The soul's obligation in coming. (1) Gratefully to acknowledge the infinite mercy by which this attractive influence has been exercised, and to which the fellowship with Christ is due. (2) Diligently to act as the Father's agent in bringing other souls to Jesus. We can trace the Divine power in the human agency which was employed to lead us to the Saviour. The same God can still use the same means to the same result.—T.

Ver. 62.—*The Ascension foretold.* The aim of our Lord's conversation with the Jews was to convince those who were prepared for the revelation, that he was the Divine Mediator, and that union with him was the one hope of salvation for sinful men. An inferior claim he could not have made. Yet this assertion of his power and dignity was an offence to many who heard the Saviour's language, and who could not believe that the lowly Nazarene occupied a place so exalted in the counsels of the Eternal. Jesus, perceiving that both the cavillers and the disciples were perplexed by his statements and demands, instead of withdrawing anything that he had said, asked them how they would be impressed should they witness his ascension to his proper abode? Although the evangelist John does not record the Ascension, this is not the only passage in which he attributes to Christ language referring to that great event; a fact in favour both of the actual occurrence of the Ascension and of John's acquaintance with it. This great and final event in our Lord's earthly ministry was—

I. A SUITABLE CONCLUSION TO HIS CAREER ON EARTH. As his birth had been supernatural and his ministry likewise, as his resurrection from the dead had in this respect corresponded with all that had gone before, it was proper that his final departure from earth should be distinguished by what was more than human in incident and in power.



He could not die a second time; how could he disappear from among men more appropriately than in the manner he himself had foretold?

II. AN EVIDENT PROOF OF THE DIVINITY OF HIS PERSON AND MISSION. And this in two ways. 1. Jesus had expressly and repeatedly foretold that he should ascend into heaven; the fact of his doing so proved his Divine foreknowledge. 2. At the same time, his ascension distinguished him from all others. He was not even, like Elijah, taken up; he ascended in the exercise of his own native power.

III. A NECESSARY CONDITION OF THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT. He himself had said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come." His work was to be completed in the bestowal of spiritual influence for the enlightenment and conversion of mankind. It was when he ascended on high that he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.

IV. A PREPARATION FOR THE ESPECIALLY CHRISTIAN LIFE OF FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY. Through the Ascension Christ's friends and followers realize their union with an unseen Saviour. The invisible sphere, which apart from this seems so remote, is thus brought near. Christians, risen with Christ, set their affections upon things above.

V. A POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR THE CHURCH'S LABOURS. No one can read the Book of the Acts of the Apostles without feeling that the ascension of Christ, recorded in the first chapter, is the key to the whole of the narrative. The Lord went into heaven, but left his servants upon earth, to carry out his instructions, and to advance his cause and kingdom. The trust came home to their hearts, and animated their ministry.

VI. THE GROUND OF A BLESSED HOPE. Jesus departed with his hands outstretched in the attitude of blessing. Blessing his people, he ascended; blessing them, he lives and reigns above; and blessing them, he will return. It is his own assurance, "I will come again;" it is the assurance of his angels, "He shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him go into heaven."

APPLICATION. If, as our Lord's language intimates, his ascension must needs awaken *surprise*, still more should it enkindle *gratitude*, arouse to *consecration*, and inspire *hope*.—T.

Ver. 63.—*The flesh and the Spirit*. Our Lord here teaches a great lesson which he several times repeated in the course of his ministry, and which is most emphatically inculcated by the Apostle Paul, especially in his Epistles to the Corinthians. There are two different principles of religion—one carnal, *i.e.* earthly and human; the other spiritual, *i.e.* heavenly and Divine; and of these the second is the true and satisfactory principle. "The flesh profiteth nothing"—the religion which is external and ceremonial, which rules itself by the letter, is vain; "the Spirit quickeneth"—the religion which begins with the inner nature, and lays all stress upon the laws and the life of the soul, is Divine, acceptable, and enduring.

I. THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SPIRIT TO THE FLESH IS APPARENT IN THE VITAL QUESTION AS TO THE NATURE OF THE UNION OF THE CHRISTIAN WITH CHRIST. The religion of the flesh teaches that, if a man could only eat the Lord's body and drink his blood, he must be saved. The religion of the Spirit tells us that physical contact in itself is worthless; and that the matter of all importance is the spiritual connection between the believer and the Saviour.

II. SPIRITUAL WORSHIP IS BETTER THAN MERE BODILY OBSERVANCES. There is a very powerful tendency in human nature to lower religion into a system of form and ceremony. Many under the Mosaic economy were carried away by this tendency, whilst the more spiritual Jews saw clearly into the true nature of acceptable worship. On this point our Lord's language is most explicit, especially in his conversation with the woman of Samaria. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

III. A SPIRITUAL CONCEPTION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS SUPERIOR TO ONE THAT IS CARNAL. It is often regarded as something of the nature of a human organization; yet our Lord's parables should convince the student that there is a kingdom altogether different from any human institution, whether political or ecclesiastical. Many are the mischiefs, as Church history abundantly teaches us, which have flowed from the fountain error of regarding the Divine kingdom according to "the flesh."

IV. THE SACRAMENTS THEMSELVES ARE ONLY RIGHTLY DEEMED OF WHEN THEY ARE VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRIT. The outward observances, the visible signs, are valuable and necessary. But they are material expressions of spiritual truth and reality; they are earthly means to spiritual ends.

V. CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE IS THAT WHICH IS RENDERED, NOT SIMPLY BY THE BODILY NATURE, BUT BY THE SPIRIT. Christ is a Master who asks not mere outward homage or conformity, but the reverential subjection, the cheerful obedience, of the whole nature. Let the spirit serve him, and the devotion of the bodily powers will follow, to prove the sincerity of love.—T.

Vers. 66—69.—*Desertion and adhesion.* It is instructive to observe that, in the course of Christ's ministry, there were those among his professed friends who forsook him. And it is also instructive to observe that such cases of desertion led Christ's real and attached friends to ask themselves what it was that held them to their Lord, and to form upon this matter a definite and decided conviction. Thus the desertion of merely nominal adherents became the occasion of a mental process which was singularly advantageous; for faith and love were thus called out and strengthened. Our daily observation shows us, that as it was during our Lord's ministry, so now and always there are those who cleave to Christ, and those who quit him.

I. HOW IS IT TO BE EXPLAINED THAT SOME PROFFESSED CHRISTIANS FORSAKE THE LORD? 1. Fickle and frivolous natures, when the novelty of discipleship wears off, revert to the careless and irreligious life of the past. Their heart is in the world, and, like Lot's wife, they look back. Some transient excitement, some personal influence, induces impressible natures to acknowledge in words that Jesus is their Saviour and Lord. But only the surface of the soul is reached, and the world has possession of the inmost depths. 2. Christ's claims to Divine authority are rejected as too lofty to be accepted by those accustomed to merely human standards. And his moral requirements are too stringent for a low ethical standard to submit to. Many would hold to Christ did he make a lower claim, or impose a laxer rule. 3. The doctrines which Christ reveals are too profound and spiritual for the carnal mind. The disciples of Jesus find that if they would know the Master's thoughts they must brace themselves to an arduous effort of spirit. From this they shrink, and consequently turn to a creed more commonplace and less exacting. One thing may certainly be said of all the various classes who are chargeable with the guilt and folly of forsaking Jesus. It is this: those who leave Christ have never really known him. If they had found eternal life in him, they would never have forsaken him for causes such as those described.

II. WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD CLEAVE TO CHRIST. 1. Because there is no one else to whom to go. The invitations and allurements which conflict with the attractions of the Saviour, however specious, are altogether vain. In the time of his earthly ministry, to whom could men go, if not to Jesus? They could find no satisfaction in the teaching and society of Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, etc. So is it now. 2. Because Christ is the supremely excellent. As the Messiah, the Son of God, able to secure forgiveness and acceptance, able to procure us all spiritual help and blessing. He is beyond all comparison the most precious. To desert him is to turn the back upon all moral perfection and Divine grace. 3. Because Christ has the highest of all gifts to bestow; *i.e.* eternal life. With this what can the promises of others for a moment compare? 4. Because Christ's own remonstrance begs us to stay with him. "Will ye also go away?" is his gracious appeal. As much as to say—For your own sake, and for my sake, remain! Since Christ has not forsaken his people, his people are bound not to forsake him. Wonderful as is the fact, it is certain that Jesus is pained and grieved by the desertion of those for whom he has done and suffered so much; it is certain that Jesus is gladdened when his people cleave closely to him in the season of temptation or discouragement.—T.

Ver. 15.—*The human and Divine idea of kingship.* We have in the connection: 1. *A wonderful miracle.* Five thousand fed. 2. *A right conclusion.* "This is the Messiah." 3. *A wrong act.* They would take him and make him King. Notice—

I. THE PROPOSAL OF THE MULTITUDE. "To make him King." 1. *The proposal was sincere and enthusiastic.* The multitude were full of the idea; it burned in their breasts,

boiled in their thoughts, flashed in their countenances, and blazed in their words. They were entirely swayed by it, and ready at any moment to break out in an apparently irresistible action. 2. *The proposal was popular.* The vast multitude were united, and even the disciples were not exempt. They were naturally drawn to the vortex of the terrible whirlpool of the popular sentiment. And although these people were not representative men, still they were fired with the national idea, and attempted to carry out the national wish with regard to the Messiah. 3. *It was thoroughly secular.* They wished to make him King in opposition to all the kings of the earth, and especially to Cæsar, and to deliver them as a nation from the hateful yoke of Rome. Thus the proposal was directly seditious, endangering their own safety as well as the safety of Christ in direct opposition to the great purpose of his life. 4. *It was utterly selfish.* (1) They wanted to *use him for their own purposes.* Instead of surrendering themselves to him and to his teaching as the Messiah, they wished him to surrender himself to them, and to serve their low and personal purposes. They were not anxious to be drawn up to him, but to draw him down to them. They thought and acted under the inspiration of the loaves and fishes. They are not the first nor last to attempt to use Christ for personal and worldly purposes. (2) They wished to *compel him to this.* They would make him King by force. If they succeeded they would really be kings, and he the subject of their selfish desires. When they would take him by force, they little thought of the counter-force they had to contend with. This is not an exceptional conduct with regard to Christ, to make him King by force. How many honours are forced upon him which he declines! (3) *It was entirely mistaken.* There is no regard paid to the Divinity and dignity of his Person, the nature of his office, or the great purpose of his life. They were doubtless sincere and enthusiastic, but their thoughts moved in a groove unspeakably lower than his. Little they thought that the honour they proposed would ill fit him; that the sceptre of the mightiest empire would ill become him who wielded the sceptre of creation; that the thrones of the Cæsars would be infinitely too small and mean to contain him who occupied and filled the throne of the universe; that the most brilliant earthly crown would be a worthless toy to him who already wore a crown bedecked with stars and suns. To offer an earthly kingship to him was a mistake and an insult.

II. THE CONDUCT OF JESUS. It shows: 1. *The unselfishness of his nature.* Consider: (1) The proposal was *real.* The multitude were unanimous. They represented the national idea with regard to the Messiah. They were terribly earnest, and determined to make him King at any cost, even by force. (2) *It was quite possible.* It was not the wild idea of a few enthusiasts, but that of a vast crowd representing the sentiments of the nation. And if Jesus were to consent they would rally round him with enthusiasm untold, and with such a General would be soon victorious. (3) From a human point of view it was *very tempting.* They wanted to make him King—the highest honour, power, and glory that people can confer on their fellow-man. Think of his low position. A poor Carpenter, and the Son of a poor carpenter from Nazareth. Under the circumstances, who but Christ would not gladly accept such an offer? What was offered him in a mental vision, or perhaps by the personal presence of the prince of this world in the wilderness, was now offered him in a more practical manner by the multitude in another wilderness. But such was the unselfishness of his nature, that the worldly honour and royal dignity and glory involved in the proposal appealed in vain to him. They had no response from his nature but the old one, "Get ye behind me." 2. *The spirituality of his mission.* (1) *Spiritual in its nature.* It would not blend with worldly objects, nor fall in with worldly schemes. (2) *Spiritual in its sphere.* The mind, the spirit, the soul, and heart. (3) *Spiritual in its means and operations.* (4) *Spiritual in its end.* The spiritual life of man; the salvation of the human race; the liberty of the captives of sin. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Here is an illustration and a proof of it. He is offered an earthly kingdom. His ideas of power, honour, and glory were diametrically opposed to those of the world. They were purely spiritual. 3. *The purity and strength of his character.* (1) His character was in *perfect harmony with his mission.* His mission was spiritual and his character was true. Strictly true to his mission and to itself; there was not a jarring note. (2) His character was *delicately sensitive to the presence of evil.* Sensitive to its invisible promptings and motives. "He perceived that they would come," etc. He was sensitive to the very

breath of worldly notions, human ambition, and petty pride. (3) His character *had a decided resisting force against evil even in its most insidious and apparently innocent forms*. How insidious and apparently innocent was evil in this proposal of the multitude! Was it not kindness and gratitude? Yes, but it was radically against the nature of his mission and the purpose of his life, and he shrank from it as from a venomous reptile. It was one thing to resist the proposal of the devil when he barefacedly offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world with their glory, on the humiliating and vile condition of worshipping him; it was another thing to resist him in the apparently innocent proposal of the multitude to make him King. It is one thing to resist the evil one in the common and glaring vices of society; it is another to resist him in the garb of kindness and in the hosannas of gratitude. Jesus did this. He had a force of character stronger than the force with which he was threatened. He became poor of his own accord, but could not be made King by force. A child could win him. A poor blind man could stop him by crying for help, but a multitude could not make him King against his will. He was taken by force once, but not before he gave a proof that it was by permission. He gave himself up to a cross, but not to an earthly crown. He sacrificed his life, but would not sacrifice his principle, his integrity, his mission, and heavenly trust. 4. *The wisdom of his conduct*. (1) He resisted the evil *at its very beginning*. "When he perceived," etc.; before it had gained too much strength, nipped it in the bud. (2) Resisted it *at once*. "Straightway," according to Mark—without any hesitation. (3) Resisted it *in the best way*. The disciples were sent away first, then the multitude. When the multitude saw the disciples depart, they lost hope and courage. He did not use extraordinary means when ordinary ones would suffice. The force of his character and wisdom were sufficient for this. 5. *The devotion of his spirit*. "He departed again," etc. We see: (1) *The manner of his devotion*. Retirement, alone. (2) *The spiritual dependence of his nature*. Independent of the crowd, but dependent on his Father. The multitudes were filled. He was hungry now for his Father's fellowship. (3) *The habit of his life*. "He departed again," etc. It was not the first time nor the last. Prayer was the habit of his life. (4) *The secret of his power*. His power was fed and nursed in secret fellowship with his Father. He went up the mountain to meet him, and came down with fresh inspiration and strength. If we want to do wonders down among men, we must retire and climb the mount to God.

LESSONS. 1. *When a multitude is inspired with wrong ideas and purposes, better disperse it*. Thus did Jesus. 2. *The best of teachers often find it difficult to gather people and keep them together*. Jesus often found it difficult to send them away; they clung to him, and he had to take himself away from them. 3. *When Divine and human forces come into collision, the human ought and must give way*. 4. *If Christ deemed it wrong to take man and make him his subject by force, it is wrong for man, or any number of men, to attempt to make him King by force*. Voluntariness is the principle of his kingdom. 5. *It is better to be alone with a mountain than to be with a multitude, when it is entirely inspired with wrong and dangerous notions*. 6. *Much honour is attempted to be forced on Jesus against his expressed will*. Such honour to him is dishonour, and will not have it. He withdraws from it. 7. *The highest honour we can pay Jesus and ourselves is to make him King of our hearts and souls*. "Enter in, thou blessed of the Lord."—B. T.

Vers. 22—26.—*False seekers and a true Saviour*. We have here in relation to Jesus—

I. A MANIFESTATION OF AN OUTWARDLY PROPER AND HOPEFUL CONDUCT. These people sought Jesus, and in doing so: 1. *They strove to find the right Object*—Jesus. Many seek unworthy, worthless, and injurious objects—objects unworthy of them and their efforts—the very thought of which is most debasing and morally dangerous; but these people seek the most worthy, valuable, and soul-benefiting Object it was possible for them to seek. 2. *It was most important for them and for all to find him*. So important it was, that Christ, at the expense of the greatest condescension and self-sacrifice, placed himself in their way so that they may know and truly find him. And to find him is to find "a Pearl of great price"—an eternal fortune which will make the soul really rich for ever. 3. *They strove to find him in the right way*. They sought him. Christ, as well as all the blessings of his redemption, is to be found by seeking.

"Seek, and ye shall find," is as applicable to him as to all the spiritual blessings of his kingdom. 4. *In their seeking there is much that is commendable and worthy of imitation.* (1) *There is much enthusiasm.* (2) *Intelligent observation.* They observed his movements and those of his disciples. (3) *Diligent search.* They spared no trouble nor effort. (4) *Determined perseverance.* While others had given up in despair, they persevered in spite of the conduct of others, of disappointment and difficulties. When they were convinced that he was on the other side, and that the sea was between them, this they bravely crossed. (5) *Ultimate success.* They found him, their efforts were rewarded with success—they found him.

II. A REVELATION OF WRONG MOTIVES. "Ye seek me, not," etc. This revelation shows: 1. *That Christ is perfectly acquainted with the real character of men.* He not merely knows the outward actions, but also their inward springs, motives, and inspiration. He knew the character of these men better than they themselves. He cannot be deceived by any amount of outward show and profession; the inward man is open to him. 2. *That much outward interest is often manifested in Christ from wrong and improper motives.* "Ye seek me, not," etc. It was so in the case of these people. (1) *Their motives were utterly selfish.* They sought him, not for his sake, but for their own; not on account of what he was in himself, as manifested in his mighty works, but on account of what he might be to them as experienced in the loaves. They sought not Jesus at all, but their own self-interest in the results of his miracles. (2) *Their motives were lamentably low.* They were not merely selfish, but they were such as pertained to their lowest self. "Because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled." They sought him, not even from intellectual curiosity, but from selfish gratification; their inspiration in seeking him came not from the higher region of the heart and soul, but from the lower region of the appetites. They seem to have partly lost the national idea of the Messiah's kingship which they entertained on the previous day; they now wish to crown him as the King of human food. (3) *Their motives reveal the complete ascendancy of the animal and the dormancy of the spiritual in them.* They seemed to have been entirely under the reign of their physical nature; the spiritual seems fast asleep. The body was all alive and loud in its demands and satisfaction, but the immortal soul uttered not a word about her existence, wants, and misery—not even in the presence of Jesus. 3. *That much of the interest manifested in Jesus is inspired by wrong motives,* although the greatest advantages are enjoyed to possess the right ones. (1) *These people had seen the mighty works of Jesus.* They had seen the signs—not one, but many; they were performed before their very eyes. They had enjoyed their temporal benefits, and they possessed the required capacities to comprehend their meaning and mission. (2) *These signs were eminently adapted to furnish them with right motives in seeking Jesus.* They most eloquently and convincingly proclaimed him to be a Divine Person; their Messiah, the Son of God, come on a special mission, not to feed their bodies, but to save their souls; not to deliver from the Roman yoke, but from the yoke of sensuality and vice and spiritual death. (3) *But in spite of all this he is sought from low and wrong motives.* "Ye seek me, not," etc. The right and natural motives are ignored, and wrong and unworthy ones are adopted. The loaves are more valued than the Divine power which multiplied them; the streams are more valued than the fountain—the means than the end. The Divine miracles of Jesus are prostituted to gratify the lowest appetites; the powers of the world to come are prostituted to serve the low ends of this, and an attempt is made to make the King of souls the slave of human bodies. 4. *That any amount of interest in Jesus, in the absence of right and proper motives, is quite worthless.* A right motive alone can make an action morally and spiritually right, valuable, and acceptable. As such: (1) *It is worthless to the man himself.* "Though I speak with," etc. (2) *It is worthless to Jesus.* Nothing is valued by him but what proceeds from right motives and worthy considerations—considerations of our spiritual wants, and his willingness and power to satisfy them. Motives with Christ are the final test of character and attachment to him. 5. *That Jesus reveals the wrong motives of men in relation to him in order to improve them.* In some cases he seems to do this for the improvement of others; but in this case, as well as generally, for the improvement of those he addressed. (1) *The revelation is made directly to them.* "I say unto you," etc. Not to some one else. Christ was honest and straightforward, and told people their faults to their faces.

He holds the looking-glass of truth before the man, so that he may see his moral image. And it is a great help to improve a man to let him see himself. (2) The revelation is made *with solemn emphasis*. "Verily, verily," etc. Indicating the absolute truth of the charge, and its paramount importance with regard to their destiny. (3) The revelation is *in a reforming spirit*. It is firm and condemnatory, still is moderate—a simple and plain statement of facts; and its evident intention was to benefit, correct, and improve them, elevate their tastes and motives, raise them from the material to the spiritual, from body to the soul, and from the temporal to the eternal. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the signs," etc. There you lost it. You must retrace your steps and look at me through the miracles, and not through your own low self-interest; through your spiritual nature, and not through your physical appetites. Then you will see that the spiritual wants of your souls are infinitely more important than those of your bodies, and that I am divinely sent to feed and save you.

LESSONS. 1. *That Jesus could not be deceived by popular demonstrations in his favour.* And what would cheer religious teachers generally rather saddened him, for he could see the inward motives as well as the outward movements; he judged from within, and what a man was inwardly he was really to him. He found this wanting often, even when the outward was promising. 2. *That Jesus, with regard to his followers, went in for quality rather than quantity.* He invited all, and would welcome all with equal readiness and joy. But only the genuine he would receive and encourage; the ungentle he would reject and reprove. He preferred a few real followers to a multitude of "loafers." 3. *On the great day of revelation it will be found that the religion of many was based upon selfish and worldly considerations,* and not upon genuine faith and love, and warm attachment to the Saviour. 4. *Inasmuch as purity and spirituality of motives and intentions are so essential in relation to Christ and the salvation of our souls, we cannot be too careful in this direction,* especially when we consider that worldliness and selfishness are our most besetting and insidious sins. They clandestinely entwine around our most sacred devotions and services, and appear often innocent and agreeable; but nothing can so efficiently separate from Christ. Hence the necessity of the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart," etc.—B. T.

Vers. 37—40.—*The Father's will and its Executor.* We see: 1. *That the majority of Christ's hearers disbelieved him.* His verdict at last was, "Ye believe not;" "Ye will not come." 2. *That they disbelieved him in spite of the greatest advantages to faith.* (Ver. 36.) 3. *That in spite of their obstinate unbelief and cruel rejection, the gracious purposes of God and the mission of Jesus will not be void.* "For all that the Father giveth me," etc. Notice—

I. THE FATHER'S WILL. We see in this will: 1. *That he has given a certain number of the human family to Christ.* In a general and a true sense all the human family have been given him; they are the objects of his saving love and grace. All are invited to the gospel-feast, and commanded to repent. The earth is Immanuel's land, and the human race, without exception or partiality, are the objects of his saving mercy. But there are some specially given to Christ; they are spoken of as such: "All that the Father giveth me." They have been given in the past in purpose; they are given in the present in fact. This suggests: (1) *That the salvation of the human family is carried on according to the eternal purpose and plan of God.* Everything has been arranged from the beginning. Nothing happens by accident; neither the Father nor the Son is ever taken by surprise. (2) *That the mission of Christ is not a speculation, but with regard to him an absolute certainty.* Speculation is a term unapplicable to Divine proceedings; they are fixed and determined as to their mode and result. Jesus lived and acted on earth in the full consciousness of this. And who would not rejoice that the blessed Redeemer was not in this hostile world as the creature of chance and at the mercy of fate, but ever fortified with the knowledge of his Father's will and purpose, the consciousness of his Father's love, and the certainty of the success of his own mission? 2. *That the Father gave these to Christ, because he knew that they would come to him.* Let it be remembered that the division of time, as past, present, and future, is nothing to God. All time to him is present. In his plans and election he experienced no difficulty arising from ignorance, but all was divinely clear to him. And we see that he is not arbitrary in his selections. We know that his authority is absolute; that he has

the same authority over man as the potter over the clay. He can do as he likes, and perhaps this is the only answer he would give to some questioners, "I can do as I like." But we know that he cannot like to do anything that is wrong, unreasonable, or unfair. He cannot act from mere caprice, but his actions are harmonious with all his attributes, as well as with the highest reason; and can give a satisfactory reason for all acts, and justify himself to his intelligent creatures. The principle on which he gave certain of the human family to Christ was willingness on their part to come to him. In the gifts of his providence he has regard to adaptation—he gives water to quench thirst, etc. But, in giving human souls to Christ, he had a special regard to the human will. He knew as an absolute fact that some would refuse his offer of grace in Christ, and that others would gladly accept the same offer under the same conditions. The former he neither would nor could, the latter he graciously gave. It is an invariable characteristic of those given to Christ that they give themselves to him. 3. *Those given to Christ shall certainly come to him.* "All that the Father giveth me shall," etc. Jesus was certain of this. And if given, they come; and if they come, they were given. Divine foreknowledge is never at fault, and Divine grace can never fail to be effective with regard to those thus given to Christ. Their coming was included in the gift. There was the knowledge of their coming, and every grace, motive, and help was promised with the gifts; so that their arrival to Christ is certain. They shall come, in spite of every opposition and difficulty from within and without. 4. *That these were given to Christ in trust for special purposes.* These are set forth: (1) *Negatively.* "That I should lose nothing" (ver. 39). Not one, not the least, and not even anything necessary to the happiness of that one. (2) *Affirmatively.* "May have everlasting life." The highest good they could wish and enjoy. (3) *That they should have these blessings on the most reasonable and easy terms.* By simple acceptance of the gift, and simple and trustful faith in the Giver (ver. 40).

II. JESUS AS THE EXECUTOR AND TRUSTEE OF THE FATHER'S WILL. In these capacities: 1. *He is most gracious,* for (1) the work involves the *greatest responsibilities.* It is true that those given shall come to him. But look at their miserable condition. They are guilty; he must procure their pardon. They are condemned; he must justify them. They are corrupt; he must cleanse and sanctify them. They are sick; he must heal them. They are in debt; he must pay it. The responsibilities are infinite. (2) It involves the *greatest self-sacrifice.* To meet these responsibilities required the greatest self-sacrifice possible. Before they could be justified, he himself must be condemned; to heal them, he must be mortally wounded; to make them rich, he must become poor; to pay their debt, he must lay down his life as a ransom; and to bring them unto glory, he must be made "perfect through sufferings." What but infinite love would accept the trust and execute the will? 2. *He is most tenderly and universally inviting.* "Him that cometh to me I will," etc. These words are most tender and inviting. They were uttered in the painful consciousness that many would not come to him, although there were infinite provisions and welcome. The door of salvation need not be wider, nor the heart of the Saviour more tender, than this. There is no restriction, no favouritism. "Him that cometh." 3. *He is most adapted for his position.* This will appear if we consider: (1) That he is *divinely appointed.* "The Father which sent me." The Father appointed him to be the Trustee and Executor of his will. And he knew whom to appoint. He acts under the highest authority. (2) He was *willing to undertake the trust.* It is true that he was sent, but as true that he came. "I am come down from heaven" (ver. 38). There was no coercion. His mission was as acceptable to him as it was pleasing to the Father, so that he has great delight in his work. (3) He is *thoroughly acquainted with the Divine will.* Perfect knowledge is essential to perfect execution. Many profess to know much, but where is the proof? Jesus proves his knowledge by revelation. "This is my Father's will," etc. He was acquainted with all its responsibilities, its purposes, and sufferings, as well as all the difficulties in carrying it out. This he knew from the beginning before he undertook the trust. (4) He is *enthusiastically devoted to both parties*—to the Testator and the legatees. He is devoted to the Father. "I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but," etc. He had a will of his own, but in his mediatorial office it was entirely merged in that of his Father. He is equally devoted to the objects of his Father's love; for "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And he could say more—he would help and almost compel

him to come in. (5) He is *divinely competent*. He is the Son of God, the Elect of the Father, ever conscious of his capacities for this work. Not a shadow of doubt in this respect ever came across his mind. He was serenely conscious of fulness, of power, of life—the fulness of the Godhead; and he gave ample proof of his Divine competency as he went along. The sick were healed, the dead were raised, the guilty were pardoned, and all penitents who appealed to him were saved. Naturally and well he might say, “I will raise him up at the last day.” And being able to do this, he can do all. All the qualifications necessary to execute the Divine will with regard to the human race full-meet in him. “His will be done.”

LESSONS. 1. *The purposes of the Divine will are in safe hands.* Not one shall suffer on his account. 2. *The lives of believers are in safe custody.* Nothing will be lost. 3. *The mission of Jesus is certain of success.* “All that the Father giveth me,” etc. 4. *The perdition of man must come entirely from himself.* All the purposes and dispensations of God, all the mediatorial work of Jesus, are for his salvation. All that God in Christ could do for his deliverance is done. Nothing but his own will can stand between him and eternal life. 5. *The duty of all to come to Jesus and accept his grace.* There is a marked difference between the conduct of Jesus and the conduct of those who reject him. He receives the vilest; they reject the most holy and gracious One. He opens the door to the most undeserving; they close it against the pride of angels, the inspiration of the redeemed, and the glory of heaven and earth. Beware of trifling with the long-suffering mercy of Jesus. The last thing he can do is to cast out; but when he casts out, he casts out terribly.—B. T.

Ver. 66.—*The sad departure from Christ.* Notice—

I. THAT THE MINISTRY OF JESUS REPELLED MANY. “From this time many of his disciples,” etc. And why? 1. *Because his ministry revealed their true character to themselves and others.* (1) *As unreal.* They were miserably wanting in sincerity, honesty, and earnestness. (2) *As worldly, secular, and carnal*—wanting in spirituality and true concern for the soul. (3) *As selfish.* They were self-seeking and self-righteous. (4) *As wicked.* (5) *As unbelieving.* 2. *Because his ministry was diametrically opposed to their real character.* He preached repentance—inward reform, heavenly birth, and honesty, which were opposed to their hollowness of principle. He preached the superior claims of the soul and spiritual things, which were opposed to their carnality and worldliness. He preached self-sacrifice and love and exemplified them in his life, and these were opposed to their selfishness. He inculcated holiness, which was opposed to their wickedness and vice. He demanded practical and genuine faith, which was opposed to their infidelity and indifference. He denounced their conduct, and enforced opposite principles with such force and honesty that at last his ministry not merely became unattractive to them, but obnoxious and painful. 3. *Because his ministry was uncompromising and unchangeable.* He would not pander to their likings in any way. He was the true and faithful Witness. There was no discord in the music of his ministry. So that his followers had either to change, exercise faith in him, or follow him under a cloak of profession, or leave him entirely. These chose the latter; they “went back, and walked no more,” etc.

II. THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO GO A LONG WAY WITH JESUS AND THEN LEAVE HIM. It was so in this case. We have here: 1. *A sad separation.* “They walked no more,” etc. (1) *They left Jesus, and not Jesus them.* He did not send them away. All moral separations from Christ are commenced by man. Judas shall remain in the society of Jesus till he goes out himself. An illustration of what our Lord had just said, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (2) *They separated from him after being with him for some time.* “They walked no more with him.” They had walked a good deal with him. They were his disciples. They had attended his ministry, heard his gracious words and saw his mighty deeds, but separated at last. (3) *They separated from him although they had received much kindness from him.* Their sick were healed, their miseries alleviated, and their hunger satiated. They had only just been feeding on his bounties in the desert; but now they leave their old Benefactor, who was willing, able, and anxious to bless them spiritually and eternally. What ingratitude and perversity! (4) *They separated from him for ever.* This was certainly the case with regard to his society in this world. There are sad



partings often on earth, and painful social separations by distance and death; but of all sad separations, the saddest is the separation of the soul from Christ—of an old disciple from his Master. 2. *A sad loss to them, not to Jesus.* (1) *They lost what they had gained.* We can scarcely think that they could have been with Jesus without being somewhat benefited. Some of them, we may conjecture, were almost Christians, but in leaving Christ they lost all, even what they had; much of their best energies were wasted. (2) *They lost what they might have gained.* What they had from Jesus was nothing to what they might have. What he had done for them was only introductory to what he would do. They left him on the threshold of the temple of truth and salvation, and thus lost the best society, the divinest ministry, their only Deliverer, and the inestimable blessings arising from union with him. What a sad loss! 3. *A sad retrogression.* They went back. (1) *To go back from Christ is to go back from all good.* For he is the incarnation of goodness, the exhaustless Treasury of all spiritual blessings, and the only Saviour of the soul. To go back from him is to recede from the standard of moral excellency, and the centre of redemptive help and grace. (2) *To go back from him is to go on towards all evil and its consequences.* Man cannot be spiritually stationary; and in the opposite direction of Christ there is only evil—the cold breath of infidelity, the darkness of spiritual death, and the terrible whirlwinds of despair and misery. (3) *To go back from Christ is one of the worst symptoms of the soul.* While man clings to Christ there is some hope of him; but when he tears away from him, he manifests a sinful force which breaks through the mightiest moral power which can be brought to bear on him, and his character seems fixed and his destiny decided. We speak of going back in the world, but this is the saddest going back of all—to go back from Christ. “Many of his disciples went back;” but Christ went on in his eternal course of benevolence, redemption, and glory.

LESSONS. 1. *What ought to attract people to Christ often drives them away from him.* It was so here. 2. *There are crises in the Christian ministry and in the lives of disciples which severely test their Christian character and attachment to Christ.* “From that hour,” etc. 3. *There are many who will follow Jesus while everything runs smoothly, but leave him at the least offence or difficulty.* They will not stand the test. 4. *Those who leave Jesus early rather than follow him under a false profession are better off than those who follow on thus to the last.* These disciples who left him now were better than Judas, who continued to the bitter end. 5. *It is better not to follow Jesus at all than, after following awhile, turn back again.* They are worse at the end than the beginning—more difficult of recovery. And the recollection of their time with Jesus will only be the painful memory of better days, brighter hopes, nobler possibilities, which must enhance their misery.—B. T.

Vers. 67—69.—*The departure of the many consolidating the few.* Notice—

I. **JESUS' QUESTION.** “Will ye also,” etc.? This implies: 1. *His regard for the freedom of the will.* Christ does not destroy, nor even interfere with, the freedom of the human will, but ever preserves and respects it. He ever acknowledges the sovereignty of the human soul and will. 2. *That it was his wish that each disciple should decide for himself.* “Will ye,” etc.? (1) *The personality of religious decision.* Religion is personal. Every religious act must be personal, and is ever judged as such. (2) *The importance of religious decision.* “Will ye,” etc.? A most important question to them in its immediate and remote issues. Their destiny hangs upon it. (3) *The urgency of immediate decision.* If they had a wish to leave him, the sooner the better. The question of our relationship to Christ cannot be settled too soon. It demands immediate consideration. 3. *That it was not his wish to retain them against their will.* (1) This would be against the principle of his own life. (2) It would be against the principle of all spiritual life. (3) And against the great principle of his kingdom, which is willing obedience and voluntary service. Whatever is done to him against the will, or without its hearty concurrence, has no virtue, no spiritual value. All his true soldiers are volunteers. Unwilling service must lead to separation sooner or later. 4. *His independency of them.* (1) He is not disheartened by the great departure. Many went back. He was doubtless grieved with this, with their want of faith and gratitude, but was not disheartened. (2) He is independent of even his most intimate followers. “Will ye,” etc.? If even they had the will to go away, he could afford it. One might think that

he could ill afford to ask this question after the great departure from him. He had apparently now only twelve, and to these he asks, "Will ye also," etc.? He is not dependent upon his disciples. If these were silent, the very stones would speak; if the children of the kingdom reject him, "many shall come from the east," etc. 5. *His affectionate care for them.* "Will ye also," etc.? In this question we hear: (1) The sound of *tender solicitude*. There is the note of independency and test of character; but not less distinctly is heard the note of affectionate solicitude for their spiritual safety. He did not ask the question of those who went away. (2) The sound of *danger*. Even the twelve were not out of danger. Although they were in one of the inner circles of his attraction, they were in danger of being carried away with the flood. (3) The sound of *tender warning*. "Will ye also," etc.? You are in danger. And their danger was greater and more serious than that of those who left; they were more advanced, and could not go away without committing a greater sin. (4) The sound of *confidence*. The question does not seem to anticipate an affirmative reply. With regard to all, with the exception of one, he was confident of their allegiance.

II. THE DISCIPLES' ANSWER. Simon Peter was the mouthpiece of all. The answer implies: 1. *A right discernment of their chief good.* "Eternal life." This, they thought, was their greatest need, and to obtain it was the chief aim of their life and energy; and in this they were right. 2. *A right discernment of Jesus as their only Helper to obtain it.* Little as they understood of the real meaning of his life, and less still of his death, they discerned him (1) as the only *Source of eternal life*; (2) as the only *Revealer of eternal life*; (3) as the only *Giver of eternal life*. "With thee are the words," etc. 3. *Implicit faith in his Divine character.* "We believe and know," etc. They had faith in him, not as their national, but as their personal and spiritual Deliverer—the Saviour of the soul, and the Possessor and Giver of eternal life. 4. *A determination to cling to him.* (1) This determination is *warmly prompt*. It is not the fruit of study, but the warm and natural outburst of the heart and soul. (2) It is *wise*. "To whom shall we go?" They saw no other one to go to. To the Pharisees or heathen philosophers? They could see no hope of eternal life from either. To Moses? He would only send them back to Christ. It would be well for all who are inclined to go away from Christ to ask first, "To whom shall we go?" (3) It is *independent*. They are determined to cling to Christ, although many left him. They manifest great individuality of character, independency of conduct, and spirituality and firmness of faith. (4) It is *very strong*. (a) The strength of *satisfaction*. Believing that Christ had the words of eternal life, what more could they need or desire? (b) The strength of *thorough conviction*. They not only believe, but also know. They have the inward testimony of faith and experience. True faith has a tight grasp. Strong conviction has a tenacious hold. (c) The strength of *willing loyalty*. "Lord, to whom," etc.? "Thou art our Lord and our King, and we are thy loyal subjects." Their will was on the side of Christ, and their determination to cling to him was consequently strong. (d) The strength of *loving attachment*. The answer is not only the language of their reason, but also the language of their affection. Their heart was with Jesus. They could not only see no way to go from him, but they had no wish. (e) The strength of a *double hold*. The Divine and the human. The hold of Jesus on them, and their hold on him. They had felt the Divine drawing, and they were within the irresistible attraction of Jesus. They were all, with one notorious exception, by faith safely in his hand.

LESSONS. 1. *Loving faith in the Saviour is strengthened by trials.* It stands the test of adverse circumstances. In spite of forces which have a tendency to draw away from Christ, it clings all the more to him. 2. *The success of the ministry must not always be judged by additions.* Subtractions are sometimes inevitable and beneficial. The sincerity of the following should be regarded even more than the number of the followers. 3. *It is a far greater loss for us to lose Jesus than for Jesus to lose us.* He can do without us, but we cannot do without him. He can go elsewhere for disciples; but "to whom shall we go?"—B. T.

Vers. 1—6.—*The feeding of the five thousand.* I. A THOUGHTLESS CROWD. Five thousand men have allowed themselves to be gathered together in a desert place, not very far indeed from places of habitation and nourishment, and yet far enough to cause faintness and famishing before they can reach them. They seem to have drifted into

this position without any thought beforehand. The only sufficiently wise person among them was a bit of a lad who had five loaves and two small fishes with him. Yet these men must not be hastily reckoned fools as the world counts fools. It is easy to be wise after the event. It was the easiest thing in the world for this crowd to get into this helpless state. For: 1. *It was a crowd.* Not an army, not a disciplined band; it had no leader. The men composing this crowd never supposed when they started off that five thousand of them were going to be in a desert place together. 2. *The most thoughtful of people cannot be thoughtful about everything.* The most thoughtful of people may also be the most thoughtless. Even while this crowd was going blindly in the track of the great Wonder-worker, many of them would have hearts filled with anxiety because of their private affairs. Not all our thinking and pondering, not all our inquiring and superintending, will keep us out of sore perplexities. We may be in the daily habit of weighing and measuring the needs of life, and yet some day, all at once, there may start up a need the possibility of which we were not able to guess.

II. A THOUGHTFUL JESUS. Jesus himself seems to have been the first to suggest the impending difficulty and danger. He always sees whither the actions of men are tending, and what complications and difficulties they are all unconsciously bringing about. Jesus himself is thoughtful concerning us, even when we are without thought, and without fear or suspicion that there is anything to think about. It is the business of Jesus, so to speak, to be thoughtful for every one of us. This world is a sinful world, a suffering world, where thousands are ever on the brink of desperation, forced onwards, as it seems, with no choice but ruin and misery. Happily it is also a world constantly thought of by a higher wisdom and power than are to be found anywhere among us. Jesus knows that sooner or later every child of man will have to accept his ministry. Not a day but many are waking up to a want more pressing and terrible than any the body can feel, and Jesus is ready for the waking up. He thinks concerning all of us all the time.

III. A PERPLEXED COMPANION. Jesus will not only be a Benefactor to the hungry multitude, he will also be a Teacher to the disciples. They had to be taught concerning difficulties where they themselves could give no effectual help. It belongs to humanity that men should ever and again be driven into a corner where neither can they help themselves, nor can any other help them by the ordinary channels of human endeavour and ability. As we come face to face with human want and woe, we must be deeply, humbly impressed with our natural inability before we can enter into all the strength of spiritual ability.

IV. A PROVIDING JESUS. He knew what he would do. Of course he did. We also can be thoughtful in our way. But, alas! the more we think the less we are able to do; the more we see to be done, and the more we see our own inability to do it. It is the glory of Jesus that he is at once the most sympathizing of all who observe human need, and the most able to help it. With him pity and providence go together. He is never tied to our ways of working. He is never taken by surprise. He is never overtaxed by the number of needy ones. He who fed five thousand could just as easily have fed five millions. He can be prompt, and yet neither strain nor hurry. He gives his own calmness and confidence to his servants. They know that his resources are theirs. Note, too, the responsibility that came on every one of these five thousand, because of his share in what was provided.—Y.

Vers. 12, 13.—*Gathering the fragments.* I. THE PROOF OF THE ABUNDANCE. There are distributions where the quantity is so limited that each has far short of what he could manage. The point of the miracle lies in this, that each had not merely something, but enough. And the proof that each had enough lies in this, that fragments were all strewn about.

II. THE EVIDENCE THAT THIS MODE OF SUPPLY MUST BE ONLY VERY OCCASIONAL. What comes easily is lightly valued. Though the people had got a meal in this marvellous way, they were not very thoughtful about the marvel. They ate on till they had enough, and then flung the residue away. Not every one would be so thoughtless, but a great many must have been, else whence the twelve baskets full? Habitual beggars are wasteful and reckless livers. There is great wisdom in the ordinance whereby man has to work so hard for his bread. He learns that he has to make the very best of

things he can. It is a pitiful confession to make; but most men are compelled into forethought through sheer necessity.

III. THE RESPECT WHICH OUGHT TO BE PAID TO BREAD. Lane, in his 'Modern Egyptians,' says of them that they show a great respect for bread as the staff of life, and on no account suffer the smallest portion of it to be wasted if they can avoid it. "I have often observed an Egyptian take up a small piece of bread which had by accident fallen into the street or road, and after putting it before his lips and forehead three times, place it on one side, in order that a dog might eat it rather than let it remain to be trodden underfoot." Consider the marvellous transmutation by which bread becomes flesh and blood. Make the very best of it, then. Remember how Jesus has taken it as the symbol of that spiritual sustaining force which is to be found in him. One would have expected these people each one to take his own remaining fragment as an interesting memento of the wonderful deed. Even if it had become hard as a stone it would still have been there to recall the mercy and power of Jesus on an occasion of great need.

IV. WE ARE REMINDED THAT THERE IS NO ULTIMATE WASTE IN THE UNIVERSE. Jesus will have us waste nothing. We may be sure, then, that he wastes nothing himself. A great deal of rain falls where it cannot freshen anything, but sooner or later it finds its work and does its mission. We must not measure utility by our power to see it. What are called waste products in many manufactures turn out even more valuable than the direct products. Things reckoned useless are experimented on, and so in due time their value is discovered.—Y.

Vers. 27—29.—*Working and eating.* In looking at the feeding of the five thousand, we must not allow the miraculous provision to hide the equally important element of the free donation. Jesus might have provided all this vast supply of food miraculously, and yet have said also, "Now you that can pay must pay." But all the necessities of the case required promptitude, and it was best to give freely. We see, however, that immediately the people began to draw wrong conclusions from this free giving. They wanted to make the Being of so much ready power their King, to be at their beck and call, so that the table might never be without a meal, the cupboard without a loaf. Jesus had to turn the people sharply away from these dreams of sweet nothing to do. Jesus is a Giver—Giver of ample and appropriate gifts—but always upon conditions. Not without great need does Jesus speak here of work. Jesus did not come into the world that men might work less, but rather all the more.

I. THE AIM OF WORK ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL. This work must be for much more than the getting of a living. Jesus sees us sweating, straining, worrying, all to support natural life; and yet this support will neither make natural life safe, nor will it stave off the decay of natural powers. The old man does not get out of bread what the young man does. Natural life is but a means to a life more precious still. We turn things upside down when we give the chief thought of life to the producing of daily bread. That is a thing we must, indeed, think about, but let it be in the right way. A joiner must think about the sharpening of his tools; if he lets them get blunt his work will soon come to grief. But suppose a joiner thinks so much about the sharpening of his tools as never to do anything but sharpen them; why, he will soon sharpen them out of existence altogether. He does enough when he keeps his tools sharp for their proper work. The natural exists for the spiritual. The earthly exists for the heavenly. Let there be the work that men can see, but alongside of it let there be work just as hard, just as steady, having for its aim the prosperous growth and maintenance of the life that men cannot see.

II. THERE CAN BE NO SUSTAINING OF SPIRITUAL LIFE WITHOUT WORK. This point cannot be dwelt upon too much. There is no danger of us forgetting that we must work for the perishable bread. The world is full, always has been full, of them that work with their hands. Civilization means work—hard, continuous work. But somehow, when we come to consider spiritual life and growth, the idea of work seems to slip out of the mind altogether. So much of our talk about spiritual life and growth is mere talk, without basis of real experience and urgent desire of the heart. Then, too, we talk so much of God's grace, and God's giving, and man's inability, and the virtue of simple trust, that it is very easy to forget the need of spiritual industry. It is well,

therefore, to have Jesus emphasizing this very need. Man does not leave the earth to bring forth of itself. Other things being equal, it is work that tells the most. And surely the same law may be expected to apply in our spiritual concerns. It cannot be all the same for the devout, prayerful, humble reader of his New Testament and for him who altogether neglects it.

III. THE MAIN ELEMENT IN SPIRITUAL INDUSTRY. "Believe in him whom God hath sent." True faith is true work. We are apt to get confused in distinguishing between faith and works—as if faith were not work, and very hard work too. Distinguish between faith and works as much as you please, but let it be a distinction between one kind of work and another. Is it to be supposed that a real, calm, intelligent, steady trust in Jesus can be got all at once? Surely it is one of the great attainments of the regenerated heart, coming after much experience, to say as Paul said, "I know whom I have believed."—Y.

Ver. 27.—*Never turned away.* It is the disposition of some men so to act as if they should have it written up on their doors, "Him that cometh to me I always send empty away." Others go to the opposite extreme. They have the giving disposition, but they give without judgment. Here we are directed to a Giver, a Helper, who never turns a suppliant away, never says a harsh word to him, is always both able and willing to give, if only the needy will get themselves ready for what is offered. Such are the resources of Jesus, such his sympathy, such his insight into human need, that he can ever say, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The words are at once a finger-post and a welcome.

I. REMEMBER DISTINCTLY THE DEPENDENT CONDITION OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS. We are, constantly, every one of us going to some one or other; and just as constantly others are coming to us. The dependence is none the less real because we come with money in our hands. Life begins with dependence and ends with dependence. We are members one of another. Jesus himself was not free from this great law of reciprocity in need. It was part of the fulness of his humanity that he should come to other human beings for the supply of common wants, just like all the rest of us. Even in the higher matters connected with his great spiritual purposes, there is a coming of Jesus to us. Not only do the branches come to the vine for the life that is to make them useful, but the vine also comes to the branches to find places where it may deposit and manifest its life. So when Jesus speaks of coming to him, this great fact of human dependence should excite in all of us the deepest interest in his words.

II. THE LIMITS OF THIS DEPENDENCE. There is a great difference between buying bread and begging bread. You will not be cast out as long as you have money to pay for the loaf. But go begging instead of buying, and you will soon be cast out. If you were to give to every one asking, turning not away from a single suppliant, such an army of askers would gather round you as would soon bring your giving to an end. A great deal must be done in the way of casting out for this reason, if for no other, that our resources are so limited. We are not as Elijah when he lodged with the widow at Zarephath. The secret of the unwasting barrel of meal and the unfailing cruse of oil is not with us.

III. WE HAVE ONE WITH UNLIMITED SUPPLIES. Jesus spoke to those who knew the attitude of the suppliant and the needy. A great crowd had come to him, hungering for the bread that perisheth, and he had not cast them out. But now he desired them to come, seeking for a better bread. We are not as concerned about spiritual life and spiritual sustenance as we are about natural life and natural sustenance. What greater calamity can happen to the natural life of men than that bread should become dear and scarce, and those who go seeking to find it cheap and plentiful should be, as it were, cast out? Such may happen in transactions over the bread that perisheth. Here is Jesus, speaking of the bread that endures to eternal life. As the appointed Donor and Custodian of that bread, he says no one coming to him will be cast out. You dare not write such an inscription over your door. The most capable of men, the man of largest resources, understands perfectly how he is in charge, not of a fountain, but of a reservoir. Jesus only can make the declaration without limit as to numbers or to time. Coming to him, we come to One who speaks out of the infinite and the eternal.

IV. THOSE WHO FAIL TO STAY WITH JESUS GO WITH A VOLUNTARY LEAVING.

"Many disciples went back, and walked no more with him." But they were not driven away, cast out; they went of their own accord. Jesus never turns any one back to sole dependence on the things of time and sense. If we like to call refusal of selfish desires and discouragement of frivolous pleasures a casting out, we may do so, but that is truly no casting out which is a voluntary going out. God seems to say to us every morning after our solid, substantial breakfast, "I have given thee the natural; wilt thou not also have the spiritual?" Days will come when all the abundance of bread will do our bodies little good. The flesh will fail. The outward man will perish. Jesus makes his declaration that the inward may be renewed day by day.—Y.

**Ver. 67.—Apostasy from Jesus.** What candour there is in the Gospel narratives! Many went away from Jesus, and no concealment is made of the great apostasy. We are not to suppose that the whole company departed simultaneously, as if the heart of one man was in their breasts. Probably they went one or two at a time. Some would go openly, some under cover of darkness. We may be certain Jesus had his eye on each one as he departed, and he desired those still remaining to mark those who had gone. A critical time had come. Jesus could not be utterly silent about the apostates. He wanted some word to be spoken that would make a clear line between those who went and those who stayed. It was no astonishment to Jesus that *some* should go back and walk no more with him. He was even prepared to see *many* shrinking from his searching tests. But if all had gone, if he had been left in utter solitude, a Teacher with nobody to teach, a Messenger with none to welcome his message, he would have been astonished.

**I. CONSIDER THOSE WHO WENT.** 1. *How came they to Jesus at all?* This is best answered practically by considering how people now first of all come into connection with Jesus. Departure is ever going on of those who in some way, for some time, have been in connection with Jesus. What can be a more decided bringing of human beings to Jesus than all that is included in early training. Think of the thousands whom loving mothers bring to Jesus on the strength of his own strong words, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me." Coming is a thing of degrees, as departing is a thing of degrees. There must ever be movement in one direction or the other. We cannot, as Jesus did, single out particular individuals. There would be neither charity, humility, nor advantage in doing that. In truth, Jesus did not so much single out the apostates as they themselves did. 2. *How came they to go?* Their own plea would be found in the hard sayings of Jesus. They would profess a lack of the sensible and the practical in these sayings. That is just where the mistake generally comes in. We want all speeches and actions measured by our estimate of the possible and the desirable. If mysterious and difficult utterances are to shut out Jesus from the rule of human hearts, then he will never get the devotion of a single one. Those who went away professed to find the sayings difficult; that does not mean that those who stayed found them easy. The real reason for departure lay in this, that those departing had never faith of the right kind in Jesus himself. Many words of Jesus are really difficult—difficult of necessity and of purpose—but quite enough of his words are clear and plain to take away all ground for basing reasonable apostasy on them. No one can know better than Jesus himself how often his wisest, deepest words have been made the base and carnal excuse for unbelief.

**II. CONSIDER THOSE WHO STAYED.** Listen to their spokesman, Peter. Their spokesman, but not, therefore, the real, true representative of every one of them. Recollect Judas stayed, and for all we can see he might just as well have gone with the rest. Peter's answer, up to a certain point, was satisfactory. It cannot be supposed that he understood as yet the essence and the preciousness of eternal life. But he did feel that what Jesus laid such stress on must be something unspeakably good, and so he must stay with Jesus to make sure of getting it for his own. Go where you cannot get natural food, and natural death will soon come. Go where you are out of living and abiding contact with Christ, and whatever beginnings of eternal life be in you will soon perish. Yet there is a saddening element in the answer. One would have liked it better had there been some tender expression of sympathy with Jesus in this hour of so many desertions. The state of heart by which Peter was to look at things more from Jesus' point of view was to come after.—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

## CHAPTER VII.

Ch. vii.—x. contain the record of the conflict between faith and unbelief in the metropolis. At first the narrative indicates a vast amount of critical inquiry, of unsettled opinion, of angry disappointment and a certain readiness to be convinced on the part of one section or another. The secrecy of the Galilæan village is contrasted with the broad arena of the temple-courts. "The Jews," or leaders of opinion and authority in Judæa and Jerusalem, who were hostile, are seen in contrast with "the Jews who believed on him" (ch. viii. 31). There are multitudes and multitudes (vers. 12, 30, 31), priests and Pharisees (ver. 32), the synagogue, and the blind beggar with his fearful and temporizing parents (ch. ix.). There are those who are deeply plotting Christ's destruction, and those who are indignant that any such plot is being hatched (ch. vii. 20). The discourses treat the deepest questions of ethics and theology, national prejudices and the Divine correction of them. The conversations are fragmentary, broken in thread, and yet closely interwoven, while a lifelike circumstantiality pervades the entire narrative, which argues strongly in favour of its historicity and authentic character. It is the record of definite acts and genuine questions, veritable rebukes and repartees, which have a permanent value as an insight into the character, mind, and Person of the Lord.

Ch. vii. consists of three distinct parts: (1) the conditions of the journey to Jerusalem (vers. 1—13); (2) the discussions during the feast (vers. 14—36); (3) the last day of the feast (vers. 37—52). Topically considered, we regard this section as exhibiting—

Ver. 1—ch. viii. 11.—*3. Christ as the Source of truth.*

Vers. 1—10.—(1). *Treatment of the unbelieving brethren; the hour of his full manifestation not yet come.*

Vers. 1, 2.—And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he was not willing to walk in Judæa,<sup>1</sup> because the Jews were

seeking to kill him. Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Tabernacles, was at hand. The last clause supplies a valuable chronological datum. This great climacteric feast of ingathering and joyful memories of all the goodness of Jehovah was held on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Lev. xxiii. 34—36). Consequently, according to John's own statement, six months had elapsed between the transactions at Bethsaida and Capernaum, and those which he now proceeds to describe. During these six months some of the most thrilling events in the synoptic narrative must have been enacted. The Lord "walked in Galilee." He had discussed the whole question of Pharisaic and ceremonial cleansing and food, and the entire principle of revelation and tradition (Matt. xv. and Mark vii.). He had given express illustration of his own teaching by venturing even into heathen cities, and there healing the Syro-Phœnician's child. He had journeyed towards the north of Palestine, into the Greek cities of Decapolis (Mark vii. 31), and had made a great demonstration of his healing powers on the mountain heights above the Sea of Galilee. There too (Mark viii. 1—9) he had once more fed multitudes by his word, on the second miraculous meal. It is probable that the multitudes were Gentiles, whose stock of food would have been exhausted by a three days' sojourn; that at least they were not excitable Galilæans, who might come by force and make him a King. The Pharisees assailed him, asking for a sign. The disciples, by the mouth of Peter, had confessed their faith (Matt. xvi. 13—28) in more explicit form and force than before (ch. vi. 68, 69), and Christ had explained in yet more definite terms than in the synagogue in Capernaum the needs-be for his Passion, death, and resurrection. The Transfiguration on the mountain, with its ineffaceable impressions, had followed, with numerous miracles, parables, and connected instructions (Matt. xvi., xvii., xviii.). Jesus walked for six months in Galilee, knowing, as we learn from these verses, that the authorities in Jerusalem were utterly hostile to him, and had neither forgotten nor forgiven the assertion of his special claims when he was on the last occasion in Jerusalem at the unnamed feast (be it the Feast of Passover or Tabernacles, the Feast of Purim or Trumpets). The outburst of

the old word "Jewry" in place of "Judæa." It occurs also in the Prayer-book Version of the Psalms (lxxvi. 1); and in all the older versions except Wickliffe's.

<sup>1</sup> The Authorized Version, in this place, Luke xxiii. 5, and Dan. v. 13, has retained

hostility which kept him so long from Jerusalem was circulating in angry vibrations to the very borders of Galilee. The hour for the final conflict was in abeyance until he had preached more explicitly the Divine gospel of love and redemption, and had left the indestructible seed in human hearts. There was malice in Galilee as well as in Judæa, but it took a different form. Thoma regards the sixth chapter as the ideal treatment by the fourth evangelist of the events recorded in the synoptic narrative, and, strangely enough, treats the wonders on the sea and on the land as parallels to the synoptic account of the temptation! The objection to this is not so much the underlying dissimilarity of idea as the chronological position assigned by Matthew and Luke to the temptation before John was imprisoned, whereas these events occur after his execution. Further, the synoptists record these two miracles in their proper place in the biography as well as describe the temptation. That the deep inner meaning and teaching of ch. vi. corresponds with that of the last Supper, no reader can miss; nor that this confession of Peter is the highest point of the earlier and later narratives we do not question; but their striking resemblance to each other, instead of transforming this Gospel into a philosophical allegory, appears to us to prove that we have the same historic Christ in both narratives. The Feast of Tabernacles,<sup>1</sup> the σκηνοπηγία, or tent-pitching, called by Philo σκηναί, was the last great feast of the sacred year. It had its relation to the natural and providential goodness of God. Just as the Passover commemorated the opening of the harvest and the firstfruits of the grain, and as Pentecost celebrated the completion of the harvest, so the "Tabernacles" implied the ingathering of the fruit of the vine and of the olive, and summed up the joyful acknowledgments for the whole year. Again, as the "Passover" recorded the deliverance from Egyptian bondage by the destroying angel who spared the blood-sprinkled home, and the "Pentecost" probably (Maimonides) commemorated the giving of the Law, so the "Tabernacles" recalled in a festive form the time of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, when they dwelt in tabernacles. Joyfulness and astonishing ceremonial characterized the festival. The city of palaces broke out into booths of trees and leaves in every

possible space, on walls and housetops in courtyards, and even in waggons and on the backs of camels. The people carried their palm branches and citrons in their hands, and great merriment, almost suggestive of heathen rites, prevailed. It probably gathered up about it, as some Christian festivals have done, other ancient or surrounding customs. The number of bullocks sacrificed during the seven days—one fewer on each day, beginning with thirteen—amounted in all to seventy (13+12+11+10+9+8+7=70). This the rabbis regarded as referring to the seventy nations of heathendom. Additional peculiarities were conspicuous in the immense number of priests who were required to take part in the sacrifices. The blasts of priests' trumpets which regulated the ceremonial, the great musical procession employed in bringing water from the Pool of Siloam, then within the city wall, added another noticeable feature. The water was brought in a golden goblet, and poured into a silver funnel, which conveyed it by pipes to the Kedron, and was thus supposed to bless the thirsty land. This act was accompanied by singing the great *Hallel*, and the shouts and songs of Zion were heard far over hill and valley. At night-time universal illumination prevailed, and huge candelabra in the temple-court shed a radiance over the whole city. These peculiarities of the feast rendered it the most popular, if not the most sacred, of all the feasts ('Ant.' viii. 4. 1, 'Ἐορτὴ ἁγία ὡς ἄλλη καὶ μεγίστη'). It was a time when the national sentiment often burst into fierce flame. Various historic glories of the past were called to remembrance, and spiritual privileges were symbolized in the ritual. The fact that the feast held this important place in the affections and enthusiasm of the people explains the anxiety of the family of Jesus that, whatever his claims really were, they should be canvassed in the metropolis and decided by the only authorities adequate to the task.

Ver. 3.—His brethren therefore (pointing to the high significance of this national and triumphant feast) said unto him. These brethren were (Matt. xiii. 55) James, Josès, Simon, and Jadas, and, without entering once more on the much-debated question of their actual relation to Jesus (see ch. ii. 12, and notes), it may be said that this passage in a very marked manner discriminates them from the apostles or disciples, and practically negatives the "cousin" theory derived from the supposed identification of Alphæus with Cleophas, and consequently of the sons of Alphæus (James, Judas, and Simon) with the apostles of the same names. The lack of sympathy shown by these men, and the positive assertion of their non-belief

<sup>1</sup> See Edersheim's 'The Temple and its Services,' and 'Life of Jesus,' ii. 148; The Talmud (translated by Barclay), Treatises of 'Mishnah,' with illustrations from the Gemaras, vi. "on Tabernacles;" Ewald, 'Alterthum,' p. 481; Smith, 'Dictionary of the Bible,' vol. iii. 1431.



in Jesus, is incompatible with the great confession so recently made (ch. vi. 68, 69), and cannot (with Hengstenberg and Lange) be diluted into imperfect appreciation of claims which they wished in a secular sense to press forward to full assertion. They appeared here to criticize their Brother's prolonged absence from Jerusalem, and his abstention from the Passover and other national festivals. They would, perhaps sincerely, hurry forward his public demonstration, and compel him to say to the great world what he had been saying in Galilean villages, in the borders of Tyre, and in the cities of Decapolis. Depart hence, and go into Judæa. "This is the time and place." Thoma sees in this advice the same idea which, on the mount of Transfiguration, was suggested by Moses and Elijah "concerning the departure which the Lord was to accomplish in Jerusalem." The Johannist has clothed the same material insinuation in a dialogue (*dialogische Verhandlung*). It has been said that this kind of advice is rather in favour of the hypothesis that these brethren were older than Jesus, and possibly the children of Joseph by an earlier marriage, who thus took upon themselves the function of advisers. Such a hint, however (given by Westcott), seems very shadowy confirmation of the theory. Younger brothers would be just as likely to err in the same direction. In order that thy disciples also may behold thy works which thou doest. The words "thy disciples" may (Godet, Luthardt formerly) have had special reference to the fact that our Lord had made in Judæa "more disciples than had John" (ch. iv. 1), that there were even members of the Sanhedrin who had to some extent looked favourably upon him (ch. iii. 1), and needed confirmation of their faith. There may also have been tacit reference to the circumstance recorded in ch. vi. that his Galilean disciples had deserted him; but it is more likely (Meyer) that the brethren took it for granted that those who in numerous places had received his word would be gathered together in Jerusalem, and would have an opportunity of seeing with their own eyes and in consociation with each other the works of healing and might which were being variously reported, canvassed, and disputed in the schools of Galilee. "Thy disciples" is a wide word, and may easily refer to all who, whether in Jerusalem or Galilee, went by his name. It is a designation which, however, does not include the speakers. "The works which thou art doing" is sufficiently illustrated from the group of remarkable events which had signalized the previous twelve months of the Galilean ministry (see on ver. 1).

Ver. 4.—For no man doeth anything in

secret, and himself<sup>1</sup> seeketh to be known openly. Vulgate, *in palam esse*. Lücke translates in Latin, "idemque cupit celebrer esse." The *αὐτός* answers to the subject of the verb "doeth," who yet is denied to exist by the *οὐδείς*. The *ἐν παρρησίᾳ εἶναι*, says Meyer, is "to be the opposite of a shy and timid nature," which is very unmeaning. Grimm says of the phrase *ἐν παρρησίᾳ*, "Is se gerendi modus quo aliquis omnibus conspicuus est," and justifies it by this passage and by ch. xi. 54; Coss. ii. 15 (cf. Wisd. v. 1, *Τότε στήσεται ἐν παρρησίᾳ πολλῇ ὁ δίκαιος*). So Luthardt: "It denotes that which is open, in contrast to that which is concealed." Westcott settles the meaning of the word by the remark that "the phrase (בְּפֶרֶסִיָּא) is commonly used by the rabbinical writers for 'in public,' as opposed to 'in secret.'" The man who persists in quiet, secret ways of acting, and strenuously avoids publicity, is not the man who seeketh to be illustrious and conspicuous. The brethren see a palpable contradiction between the claims which Jesus is making and the comparative retirement to which he is confining himself. The crowds of the Galilean lake are blank retirement when compared with the metropolis in the great climacteric festival of the year. The brethren call on Christ to solve the contradiction. It cannot be concealed that Jesus had (Luke vii. 16; xi. 33; xii. 2) repeatedly said, "No man lighteth a lamp and putteth it under a bushel, but on a candlestick," etc.; and so the brothers use Christ's words against himself. But the Lord's idea of needful manifestation, both as to degree, time, and place, was accurately realized and represented in both narratives. If thou doest these things. The *εἰ* is simply the logical premiss, without necessarily throwing doubt on the facts. It is not equal, however, to the particle *ἐπεὶ*, "since." Admitting these works to be real, and these mighty deeds to be correctly reported, there is from the standpoint of the brethren no other course than that which they suggest: Manifest thyself to the world; i.e. "proceed to the widest arena at once;" "thou art compromising thyself by thy retirement;" "what thou art doing with one hand thou art undoing with the other." "All the Israel world from all lands is crowding to the great feast, thy disciples amongst them;

<sup>1</sup> Tregelles, Bâle Revisers, Westcott and Hort, and the Revisers have put into their margin, with "some ancient authorities," *αὐτό* in place of *αὐτός*. These authorities are B, D\*, Sahidic, Coptic (Curetonian Syriac). Lachmann introduced it into the text, which would thus read, "seeketh it to be known openly."

make thyself known; claim the place that belongs to thee." It must be remembered that the disciples (Judas, not Iscariot, especially) said on the very night of the Passion, "How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?" This slight note of resemblance with the form of the present admonition of the brothers, is more coincident in the letter than the spirit, and received from the Lord a profoundly different reply (see ch. xiv. 22, 23, notes).

Ver. 5.—For not even did his brethren believe in him. The evangelist, writing a generation later, and keenly remembering the attitude the brothers had assumed before the Resurrection, adds, "not even his brothers," who ought to have been the most prominent of his disciples, "did up to this time believe on him," i.e. entrust themselves to him, dispose of their prejudices, change their conceptions, accept his spiritual lead, acknowledge his Divine mission, or know him to be the Holy One of God. They had not come into the position of the twelve. What ideas soever they grasped fell immeasurably short of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood," of coming to him, being given to him and drawn to him by the Father. It was a world-Messiah, a theocratic King, a Prophet-Captain, a royal Christ, that they sought and would have been glad to find in him. This treatment of the Lord was another striking parallel to the temptation of Jesus as described by the synoptists, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (see note on ch. iv., and Introduction, VIII. 5). The non-belief of the brothers is in remarkable unison with the widespread unbelief of the people, who were anxious to discern the Christ of their own traditional expectations, and ready to press almost any possible claimant to premature demonstrations. The Pharisees and the people sought some sign from heaven. But while the people demanded it, they expected that he would and might gratify them if he chose. The Pharisees cynically tempted him to proclaim what they believed would prove his irremediable failure (Weiss, 'Life of Christ,' vol. iii. Eng. trans., pp. 167—188).

Ver. 6.—Jesus then saith to them (to his brothers), My time (the "season" for my full manifestation to the nation of what I am, or the time to disclose my own idea of my own commission) is not<sup>1</sup> yet present. The season or opportunity for my final self-revelation pauses, and I pause for an intimation of the Father's will. This language corresponds with the reply to his mother, "My hour is not yet come" to do

what you blindly desire. The kind of manifestation he subsequently made on that occasion was one of love to the needy, not one of power to dazzle the world (see notes, ch. ii. 11). The underlying thought which the postponement suggested was that the approach of Jesus to Jerusalem with the pilgrim-throng would be the signal for the final outburst of bitter hostility which he knew was smouldering in the hearts of the Sanhedrists, and would also be the torch applied to the magazine of combustible passion in which he would sacrifice his life. But your time (the season which is yours) is always ready. The brothers were at liberty at any time to show themselves and their works to the world. They had plans akin to those of the world. They shared the fashion of religious thought, the ideal of the Israelitish world, completely. James, for instance, Nazarite though he may have been, punctilious in traditional ritual, and honouring the conservative passions of his order, might at any time secure the acclamations or approval of the chief powers of the world—their little world. "I" (Christ implied) "wait for the predetermined hour, for the kind of appearance in Jerusalem which will be the giving of my flesh for the life of the world. You are so much in harmony with the world that at any time you may say all that is in your heart. If I go as you suggest, it must be as Messiah; you go as pious pilgrims to share in this national celebration."

Ver. 7.—The world cannot hate you; but it hateth me, because I bear witness concerning it, that its works are evil. The "world" is here used in the current Johannine sense of "humanity unregenerate, humanity without grace, or apart from God." The hatred of the world to Christ was pressing down upon his spirit like an intolerable load. He admitted that, from its own standpoint, there was some justification for the feeling. The world hates its censor; it repels the judgment passed upon it. It is satisfied with itself and its own idea of righteousness. It is satisfied with its own standards and cries and professions, so that to be accused of wrongful notions, of a depravity under the clothing of Pharisaic propriety, of a hidden leprosy which is eating into its vitals, rouses all its animosity. If Christ were to go, he must deliver his soul. Already the thunder-peal of Matt. xxii.—xxv., to be shortly delivered after full assertion of the nature of his work, and in the metropolis of the theocracy, was hurtling in his soul, and he foresaw the outburst of maddened rage which would follow; but with melancholy and some gentle irony he said, "The world against which I have to deliver my prophetic burden cannot (οὐ δύναται, moral impossibility) hate you! Your aim is to fall

<sup>1</sup> N here reads *οὐ* for *οὐπω*, but is not followed by modern editors.

in with its demands, to realize its corrupt and unspiritual dreams. You are violating none of its cherished fancies; you are abasing none of its idols; *your time is always ready; my time is not yet come.*"

Ver. 8.—Go ye up to the<sup>1</sup> feast. "Join the pilgrim-bands. Take part in the ceremonial of sacrifice and lustration. Be there in good time for the booth-building. You have no testimony to deliver against the corruption of the holiest service, the hollowness of the ritual thanksgiving." I go not yet<sup>2</sup> unto this feast. The text as it here stands frees the language of our Lord from the charge of Porphyry, or proves that it was founded on false premisses; though the fact that the apparent refusal was so soon followed by a compliance makes it probable that the real point of the sentence rests not so much on the *ὅτι* as on the *ταύτην ἑορτήν*. Not as a pilgrim, not in triumphal procession, would he go to the Feast of Tabernacles. He reserved that solemn sacrificial act for a later occasion. He would suffer as the Paschal Lamb, not go to Jerusalem to assert the completion of its acceptable year, and to foment the self-satisfaction of its religious guides. This is not satisfactory, because there is no feast the special features of which seemed to furnish our Lord with more obvious illustrations of his own work and Person. Moreover, he did make his appearance in the midst of the feast. So Godet and Meyer accepted the *ὅτι*, and urge therefrom the fact that Jesus deliberately altered his intention, so soon as a new

motive sufficiently strong presented itself. With the assistance of *ὅτι*, or with such an emphasis upon the present tense (*ἀναβαίτω*) as to make it equivalent to the introduction of a *νῦν*, the passage means, "I am not going up *now*." Chrysostom, Lücke, De Wette, see in this suggestion the solution of the problem and a preparation for what follows. The word *ἐγγός*, "nigh" (ver. 2), may reasonably be interpreted with more latitude than is generally done. It might easily mean a date sufficiently near to be the topic of conversation in the family circle, even were it still a month before the celebration. The preparations may have been made, the pilgrims were beginning to assemble for their long journey, and the "not yet" and the emphasis on the present tense of *ἀναβαίτω* may easily have been conditioned by some of the special work which had still to be completed in Galilee on the way to Judæa and Peræa. Because my season—my special opportunity—has not been yet fulfilled; or, *fully come*. Probably this clause points to the completion of the predestined hour of his consummation, of the baptism with which he should be baptized, the fire that he would kindle, the work which he would finish.

Ver. 9.—Having said these things to them, he abode in Galilee. Such a respite cannot mean a few days only. Not until after this period, and possibly after the brethren had started on the pilgrimage, did "he steadfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem." A great question arises as to the possibility of harmonizing this journey with the great intercalated portion of Luke's Gospel (ix. 51—xviii. 31). This is not the place to consider the numerous and complicated problems involved. One thing is certain—that the synoptists all describe the final departure from Galilee, which followed a period of partial retirement from the multitude, and of instructions, miracles, and advice rendered in the inner circle of his immediate followers. They also (Matt. xvii. 24; xix. 1; xx. 17; and Mark x. 1 especially) indicate that, on our Lord's journey to Jerusalem after closing his Galilaean ministry, he went into Judæa, and thence to the land of Peræa on the other side of the Jordan. This latter statement is perfectly in harmony with John's representation (ch. x. 40), where, after an extended journey in Judæa and the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, we hear that he spent three months beyond Jordan. Numerous critics, whose views are well entitled to consideration, urge that on this occasion our Lord did resume his Galilaean ministry and effect his final departure as described in Matt. xix. 1. Now, the circumstantial way in which Luke describes incidents upon the last journey to Jerusa-

<sup>1</sup> The authorities for *ταύτην* are N\*, Γ, Δ, A, eight uncials, with many cursive manuscripts, some Italic and Syriac Versions; but the corrections of N, a, b, and B, D, K, L, T, X, Π, fifteen cursives, and numerous quotations, omit it. It is deleted by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Scholz, Lachmann, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, R.T., etc. It looks like a transfer from the next clause.

<sup>2</sup> The two texts, *ὅτι* and *ὅτι*, are curiously balanced in the ancient authorities and by modern editors. Thus for the former, N, D, K, M, Π, may be quoted, several ancient versions and some cursives; while Porphyry confirms it by making a handle of the negative to accuse Christ of vacillation, and Epiphanius commented at length upon the omission. So Augustine, Jerome, etc. The reading *ὅτι*, with T.R., Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, and R.T., rests on B, L, T, X, Γ, Δ, A, some Italic Versions, and Syriac; but Tregelles, Meyer, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Godet prefer *ὅτι*. This is one of the important texts where N and B are on opposite sides, and where R.T. follow the Vatican reading. Scrivener and Westcott and Hort coincide.

lem leads many to look for the full chronological detail of this last transaction. It contains, however, many incidents between ch. ix. 51 and xviii. 31, where the final events of the last approach to Jerusalem are brought into chronological relations with the other three Gospels, which could not all have been connected with the journey to the Feast of Tabernacles. Edersheim and Weiss alike infer that, since Luke says nothing of the Feast of Tabernacles, he has reckoned in this period the events appertaining to the Pærsæan ministry and the return to the Feast of Dedication, as well as the final determination to challenge the authorities at Jerusalem, with his assertion of true Messiahship, and the last approach to Jerusalem. Luke does not describe the route taken, but implies on several occasions Christ's growing determination to confront Jerusalem; and also implies that he had visited it "often" (Luke xiii. 31—34), with the purpose of gathering it under his gracious sway and protection. There are, moreover, a few incidents mentioned which synchronize with the journey to the Feast of Tabernacles. He went through Samaria instead of by the frequented Pærsæan route on the other side of Jordan (Luke ix. 52). There the Samaritans refuse to receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem, and the Boanerges are rebuked for their Elijah-like desire. The incident of the cure of ten lepers, one of them a Samaritan, probably belongs to the same journey; and, above all, the interesting fragment of the visit to Martha and Mary at a certain village. This village may, as Edersheim suggests, have been the retirement from which our Lord emerged in the midst of the Feast of Tabernacles. Many other of the narratives belong to the closing period of our Lord's life. The most difficult event to harmonize with the suggestions of this passage of John and with the subsequent hints of chronological arrangement, is the choice of the seventy disciples, which Weiss regards as a kind of misapprehension, but which Edersheim (*loc cit.*, vol. ii. 135) believes to have been one of the great events of this journey to the Feast of Tabernacles. It must be admitted that it is strangely inconsistent with the journey which was conducted as it were "in secret." It would be more natural to believe that it was one of the incidents of the ministry in Pærsæa, of which Mark gives traces, and for which John provides the true place (ch. x. 40). Lange and Godet argue that between the departure from the capital (ch. ix.) and the Feast of Dedication, our Lord resumed his work in Galilee, and there pursued the abundant ministry recorded between Luke x. and xviii. (see notes of Godet and Lange,

x. 22; x. 40); and that the final departure from Galilee was with a great convoy. Ewald and Meyer regard this as a violent attempt at harmonistic arrangement of the details before us. To resume the narrative—

Ver. 10.—But when his brethren were gone up to the feast,<sup>1</sup> then went he also up, not manifestly, but as it were in secret. The emendation of the text is important, for it draws attention to the fact that, while the brethren went up to the feast, he simply went up, towards Jerusalem—not, however, in the pilgrim-caravan, but as a quiet wayfarer, blessing lepers, comforting souls, pouring forth on a favoured few his truth, till he reached the certain village at the very gates of Jerusalem. What a contrast there was between the first visit (ch. ii.), when he appeared suddenly in the temple, and cast out the money-changers, or that when (ch. v.) he went to the "unnamed" feast as a pilgrim! The hostility has deepened; the "world" hates its Saviour, because he would save it from its sins, interpret it to itself, and offer spiritual rather than temporal benediction. The phrase, "in secret," has led some of the Tübingen school to suggest a docetic view of the Person of Christ; but the suggestion is reckless and absurd. Moulton, who conceives that the mission of the seventy disciples preceded this advent, says even this does not clash with the idea of a virtually secret and retired advance.

Vers. 11—19.—(2) *The controversy among "Jews" concerning Christ—his first discussion with them.*

Ver. 11.—The Jews therefore sought him at the feast. The ruling and hostile powers, the unbelieving hierarchy, Caiaphas and his party (ch. vi. 41, 52; vers. 13, 15), because of his non-appearance in the Galilæan caravan, went hither and thither, saying, Where is he?—ἐκεῖνος, "that notorious Person," whose claims maddened us some months ago, and whose deeds are being talked of throughout the city, whom the Galilæans would have constrained to take up arms and crown: where is he? Luther said that their malice was so great that they forbore to name him. But we can hardly press the ἐκεῖνος so far as that.

Ver. 12.—And there was much murmuring among the multitudes concerning him. This vivid dramatic touch lifts a veil, and we see the eager excitement of those who fancied themselves duped, or who were at least dis-

<sup>1</sup> The authorities for the transposition of εἰς ἑορτήν from after ἀνέβη to before τότε καί, are N, B, K, L, T, X, Π, some important cursives and versions; they are followed by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T., etc. The T.R. rests on D, Γ, Δ-Λ, and other uncials and cursives.

appointed by his non-appearance. Some said one thing, and some another. One group was loud in his praises, and another suspicious either of his orthodoxy or his patriotism, or both. Some said, He is a good man; i.e. one who was unselfish, kind, true, beneficent, and honest in his intentions, and one personally trustworthy. But others said—or, *were saying*; i.e. the murmur, the head-shaking, of others was a flat denial of his ἀγθοῖς—Nay; but (on the other hand) he leadeth the multitude astray. The “multitude” in this clause is probably the vulgar crowd, and the contemptuous reference to them may be the language of the Jerusalem populace rather than the provincial caravans. The multitude would escape from the Pharisaic leading-strings, should they embrace his views either concerning the sabbath or the expected Messiah.

Ver. 13.—Howbeit no man—either those who murmured to each other a favourable or a calumnious judgment—spoke out openly concerning him, by reason of (their) fear of the Jews. The hierarchy, the guardians of orthodoxy, the authorities, the rabbis by whose verdict the character and claims of Jesus must be decided, had not publicly delivered their opinion. Those who believed in the “goodness” of Jesus were silenced, or did not proceed beyond a feeble murmur of applause, however much some may have felt the truth of their own impression. Those who came to an adverse opinion were also so much cowed by the “Jews,” by the ecclesiastical authorities, that even they did not venture to express themselves save “with bated breath and whispered humbleness,” lest they might err in the form of their condemnation.

The section vers. 14—36 contains three discourses: one of which (vers. 14—24) describes the nature and ground of his human ministry; vers. 25—29, while treating the insolence of the multitude, portray an animated scene of conflicting opinion, in the course of which the Lord renewed the assurance of his Divine *origin*, as well as of the Divine sources of his teaching; vers. 30—36 refer to his approaching death or departure, as part of a Divine plan concerning him. Throughout, with dramatic propriety, the varying opinions of different classes of the people are introduced.

Ver. 14.—When it was already the midst of the feast; or, *when already the festival had reached the middle stage*.<sup>1</sup> Since the

<sup>1</sup> For this use of μεσούν, cf. Exod. xii. 29 and Judith xii. 5; common in the classics, but not elsewhere found in the New Testament.

feast lasted seven or eight days, this is reasonably supposed to be on the fourth day. We may presume that he had been spending a few days at Bethany (Luke x. 38), from retirement of which he issued rather as a Prophet and Teacher than as the Messiah of the popular expectation. He went up—he came suddenly—into the temple, into the midst of the crowds where his followers would be found, who would shield him, humanly speaking, from the covert designs of his angry assailants. “He was adorned with the wreath of popular veneration, till this wreath was torn and withered by the poisonous breath of their enmity” (Lange). He went up into the temple, and taught (ἐδίδασκε, continuously taught). We can only conjecture the theme of these instructions. They must have been sufficiently varied and peculiar to have excited much attention. Either parable, or apothegm, or stirring appeal, or quotation and interpretation from the Old Testament, or voice from the fathomless depths of his own consciousness, may have formed its staple. In his burning summons to conscience, and his gracious offers of mercy, the people who had listened to him on the mountain-side or lake-side were accustomed to say, “He speaks with authority, not as the scribes.”

Ver. 15.—The Jews therefore marvelled,<sup>1</sup> saying, etc. “The Jews,” as elsewhere, mean the ruling and learned class, the men of power and weight in the metropolis, who must have heard his teaching. The immediate effect of the appearance and words was great astonishment. In spite of themselves, they are moved by the command he manifested over all the springs of thought and feeling. The point of their astonishment is, not that he is wise and true, but that he could teach without having been taught in their schools. How doth this man know letters? (not the “Holy Scriptures,” ἱερα γράμματα, nor πᾶσας γραφάς, but simply γράμματα, literature, such as we teach it; cf. Acts xxvi. 24). He can interpret our oracles; he is acquainted with the methods of teaching, though he has not learned—has never sat in any of our schools. Saul of Tarsus was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. And ordinarily a man was compelled to undergo a lengthened novitiate in the schools before he was allowed to assume the office of a teacher. The inherited wisdom of the past is in the great majority of cases the basis of the most conspicuous teaching of the most

<sup>1</sup> Ἐθαύμαζον οὖν is the reading of N, B, D, L, T, X, 1, 33, 42, and versions; adopted by Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T.; against καὶ ἐθαύμαζον of T.R., which rests on P, Δ, Λ, Π, and other uncials and numerous versions.

original and unique of the great sages. The "Jews" were sufficiently acquainted with the origin and training of Jesus to be astonished at his knowledge of the interpretations of Scripture and other wisdom. "This tells powerfully against all attempts, ancient and modern, to trace back the wisdom of Jesus to some school of human culture" (Meyer). The attempts to establish a connection between the teaching of Christ and the hidden wisdom of the *Zendavesta*, or esoteric utterances of Buddha, or even the traditionary teaching of the *Essenes*, or the Platonizing schools of Alexandria or Ephesus, have failed. The mystery of his training as a man in the village of Nazareth is one of the evidences given to the world that there was an unknown element in his consciousness. He had not even the advantage of the schools of Hillel or Gamaliel. His own wondrous soul, by much pondering on the genuine significance of the Scriptures, is the only explanation to which even his enemies can appeal. Jesus knew the meaning, heard the murmuring of their surprise on this head, and so we read—

Ver. 16.—Jesus therefore<sup>1</sup> answered them and said, etc. He met this particular allegation as follows: My teaching is not mine. The "my" refers to the teaching itself, the "mine" to the ultimate authority on which it rests. I am not a self-taught Man, as though out of the depths of my own independent human consciousness I span it. I do not mean you to suppose that my mere human experience is the sole source of my instructions (ch. v. 31). If you have sat at the feet of those who taught you, I, too, am a Representative of another; but (the *ἀλλὰ* after *οὐκ* is not equivalent to *tam . . . quam*. It introduces here the absolute source of all his teaching) it is the teaching of him who sent me. I have not learned in your schools, but am uttering the thoughts that come from an infinitely deeper source. "He who sent me" gave them to me. I have been in intimate communion with HIM. All that I say is Divine thought. I have drawn it all from the Lord of all. I came from him, and represent to you the will of God. This is a lofty prophetic claim, more urgent, more complete, than that made by Moses or Isaiah. Special messages, oracles, and burdens were delivered by the prophets with a "Thus

saith the Lord." But Jesus says *his* thoughts are God's thoughts, his ways God's ways, *his* teachings not his own, but altogether those of him who sent him.

Ver. 17.—The moral test is then applied to the great dictum which he had just uttered. If any man willeth—not merely desires, but performs the distinct act of willing—to do his will—as his will—he shall know; i.e. his intellectual faculty will be quickened into high activity by this moral and practical effort. If the Divine will concerning conduct meets the spontaneous act of the human will, if a man's will is set to fulfil the Divine will, to will and do what is revealed to him by God, the eye of the soul will be opened to see other things as well, and especially will have power to discern the all-pervading Divine element in this teaching of mine. He shall know concerning (*περί*) the teaching, whether it be of (*ἐκ*) God, or whether I speak from myself—from the simple ground of my own independent, self-taught humanity. The first and natural application of this mighty dictum and condition was a test by which the Jews might come at once to the understanding of his more than prophetic claim to teach—he having never learned in their rabbinical schools. It amounted to this: Your moral harmony with the will of God as already revealed to you will be the sure index and confirmation of the great fact I have just referred to. You will discern the Divine in my words, the absolutely true in my teaching. Here the Lord again refers to the great principle, "He that hath heard of the Father, and learned, cometh unto me;" "He that is of the truth heareth my voice." This moral submission to God will quicken all your powers to discern and come to an invincible assent as to my claims. This is not the deep subjective testimony of the inner intuition of those that already believe, by which a verbal assent becomes a full consent, an unchangeable conviction, or "the full assurance of faith;" but it is addressed to *unbelievers*, and assures those who are bewildered by the novelty and sweep of his own words that, if they are set on doing the will of God, they will become perfectly satisfied that his own teaching, such as it is, is a stream of heavenly truth bursting from the very heart of God. The text has been cited by certain writers as the sum total of the Christian revelation, almost as though it substituted practical obedience for true thinking, as though people might well be content with holy living, and might safely leave the decision of all difficult problems of thought and revelation to shift for themselves. Nothing could be further from its real meaning, either at the time or in any of its subsequent

<sup>1</sup> N, B, Γ, Δ, Α, Π, and many other manuscripts and some versions here introduce *οὐν*. They are here followed by Griesbach, Scholz, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T. There is general assent to the absence of *οὐν* in cursives and some Latin and other versions. There is much force in the particle.

or universal applications. The solemn utterance has a wide outlook, and is constantly establishing its own verity. A profound and voluntary desire to do the will of God is the best preparation for intuitively perceiving the Divine authority of Christ and of his religion. The desire for holiness of principle and life sees in Christ not only the loftiest ideal of perfection, but the surest satisfaction to its conscious weakness, and casts itself upon his promises of saving power. The faith which is satisfied with Christ is not merely a conclusion drawn by logical processes from satisfactory premisses, it is the consequence of a new nature or a moral regeneration. In other words, it is the more practical and expanded form of the truth first of all addressed to Nicodemus, and also lying at the heart of the Beatitudes: "Except a man be born anew [from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God." If he is born again he *will* see it. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "No man can come unto me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." The sentence presents the truth in a hopeful and positive form, and puts the criterion of the Divine informant within the reach of practical ethics. It is an appeal to the conscience as well as to the understanding. Apart from the subjective moral element, all other evidences of the presence of the Divine in nature, in history, in Christ, will be unimpressive and unimportant. A willingness to do the will of God is not a substitute for, but a condition of, true knowledge.

Ver. 18.—The following sentence is perfectly general and applicable to all teachers of Divine truth, though it only reaches its highest expression in Christ himself. But while it has numerous applications, its first use is to ratify the previous statements, and prepare the way for what is to follow. *He that speaketh from himself.* This was an act which he, in his own case, disclaimed. The "himself" was here the personality which then was in question as a human Teacher. *He that speaketh from himself* as the Source of all his instructions. He who would take the credit of being the primal Cause and Origin of the message which he delivers is a man who seeketh his own glory, his own reputation, at the expense of those who instructed him. The Jewish schoolmen were most anxious at all times to found their instructions on Rabbi "This," or "That," who had himself quoted from some more ancient father of their erudition. A man who should presume to teach in his own name would be one who was manifestly not seeking any higher end than his own glory. Ambition of personal glory and renown is the very thing the absence of which the multitude condemned in Christ's

case. The brethren of Jesus had taunted him with the lack of bold self-assertion. Our Lord's own position just taken was that his teaching was not self-originated, but was the teaching or message "of him that sent him." But whoso (he added) seeketh the glory of him that sent him, whether the sender be a mortal man and earthly teacher, or be the Lord God of the whole world, i.e. "whoso loses his own individual purpose in the will of God, and is content to be nothing so that God may be glorified," this person (*οὐτος*) is true, trustworthy; his message is not perverted by any of the contaminating influences of the self-hood, or flesh, and there is no unrighteousness (*ἀδικία* is a stronger antithesis to *ἀληθής* than *ψευδός* is. It is the moral basis out of which falsehood springs)—no unrighteousness in him. The sentence is general, but has its prime application to Christ's own case. It is a reply to the charge that "he deceiveth the people." It is a further challenge to those who are willing to do the will of God. It is a summons to proceed a step further, and recognize the fact that the glory of God, and not his own glory, was the sole end of his teaching, and that the direct command from him that sent him formed the substance of his doctrine, however much it might clash with their preconceived ideas or dominant prejudices.

Ver. 19.—Jesus was not unaware that serious charges were brought against his interpretation of the sabbatic law; that the Jews sought to kill him for his identification of his own mind and working with the Father's mind and working. On this account for a considerable time he had confined his ministry to Galilee. The old story of the sabbath healing was now rife once more, doubtless augmented with the rumours of the healing of the man with the withered hand, and other actions profoundly in harmony with the deep meaning of the sabbath-rest. To the mind of the fourth evangelist the explanation given by Christ to the authorities in Jerusalem was of prime significance in the whole sabbatic controversy; and he has recorded the defence Jesus made of his doctrine which placed him at once on the platform of the men with whom he was now beginning a life-and-death conflict. He used their methods, and, so far as the adequate grounds of connection were concerned, he was triumphant. Did<sup>1</sup> not Moses give

<sup>1</sup> The authorities are equally divided on the text *ἔδωκεν*, which is the reading of N, L, T, R, A, and eight or ten other uncials and many cursives, and is found in Chrysostom, Cyril, adopted by Tischendorf (8th edit.), with T.R.; but *ἔδωκε*, the reading of B, D, H, and a few cursives, is preferred by

you the Law!—the whole revealed Law of God concerning moral conduct and daily ritual, a violation of the real spirit of which would be *ἀδικία*, and of which you accuse me—and (yet) none of you doeth the Law? Does he here call attention to the universal disobedience of mankind? Is he forestalling the declaration that “all have sinned, and come short;” that “in many things all offend”? Certainly not. He is about to show at greater length that the charge of *ἀδικία* stands equally against the justifiable transposition of the letter of the lower law by the incidence of a higher law. They must all know the innumerable occasions in which the letter of the law of the sabbath gave way to the law of mercy, to the law of hunger, to the exigencies of the temple services. “None of you doeth the Law,” i.e. in the sense in which you are (from other motives) expecting me to do it. He said enough to strike their consciences and charge home their cherished if secret purpose. Why do ye seek to kill me? With what right, since this is the case, do ye vent your malice against me? Meyer and Godet here differ as to the emphasis laid upon the “me.” The position of the enclitic *με* before *ἤντιν* gives it a prominence not to be overlooked. The interpretation of many—that the intention or desire to kill Jesus is the inward proof that the conscience of the Jews would admit that they were not keeping the Law which said, “Thou shalt not kill”—is very far-fetched, and weak in its force, although, according to the entire old covenant, there was much killing which was not murder. Such a reference would not correspond with the profoundly Hebrew response made by our Lord. Calvin here makes this reply of Christ a text on which to denounce, in his own day, the corruption of the papal court.

Vers. 20—24.—(3) *Treatment of the ignorance and insolence of the multitude.*

Ver. 20.—The multitude, who broke out in angry and ignorant remonstrance, answered (and said),<sup>1</sup> Thou hast a demon. Who is seeking to kill thee? Thou must have some evil spirit tormenting thee with such cruel and melancholy foreboding (cf. ch. viii. 48; x. 20). This was an outburst of insolent and ignorant amazement on their part, that One who taught so wonderfully “should imagine what they deem a moral impossibility and dark delusion” (Meyer). The design rankling in the hearts of the

authorities was too well known to our Lord, and, not deigning to notice the interruption and the insult, he continued—

Ver. 21.—Jesus answered and said to them; i.e. to the multitude who had so coarsely treated him, and to the “Jews” who were present, who were all marvelling together at the line he was taking. The very interruption was a proof both of the extent and consequence of their wonderment. One work I did, and ye are all marvelling. This one work was a very small fraction of his mighty signs, but it was one which, from its manner of operation, and from the fact that it was immediately brought before the religious authorities as an unlawful act (ch. v.), and which, moreover, became the occasion for one of the greatest of his discourses, and for his solemn claim to be the Son of God and the Arbiter of life and death, of resurrection and judgment, made the profoundest impression on the Sanhedrin, compelled them to think that he was a Man who must be sooner or later arrested, and who deserved condign punishment. He must be either submitted to, confined as a madman, or killed as a blasphemer.

Ver. 22.—Moses on this account (for this cause)<sup>1</sup> hath given (assigned) you the circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers). If we accept the text as above, the question arises—Does it refer to the parenthetical clause or to the principal verb? Meyer renders as follows: “Therefore Moses gave you circumcision, not because it originated with Moses, but (because it originated) with the fathers, and so ye circumcise,” etc., making the precedence of the law of circumcision to the sabbatic law part of the very purport of his appointment. But many others, “For this cause”—to teach this lesson—Moses, who gave the ten commandments, one of which involved the sabbatic rest,

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.) has omitted *διὰ τοῦτο* altogether, on the authority of N alone. There are certain editors who associate it with the previous verse, which, though contrary to John's usage, would be a simpler construction; followed by Lücke, Hengstenberg, Lange, Godet, and many others. Since, however, some fifteen uncials and numerous versions associate it with ver. 22, it has been adopted by R.T., although they have placed the alternative reading or pointing in the margin, as follows: *διὰ τοῦτο Μωσῆς*. This is the reading of Tregelles. Not only do the codices accredit the more difficult reading of R.T., but Chrysostom, Luther, Erasmus, Calvin (in his translation, though not in his commentary), Bengel, Luthardt, Meyer, Westcott and Hort, and Moulton have accepted it on different grounds.

Tregelles, Lachmann, R.T., and even Godet. Westcott and Hort place it in the margin.

<sup>1</sup> The authority for *καὶ ἐπεὶ* is very small, and the form is much varied. N, B, L, T, X, 23, Sahidic, Coptic, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and R.T. omit it.



took up into the Law which he gave you the still older law of the Abrahamic covenant, and laid down the stringent rule that the rite must be performed on the eighth day (Lev. xii. 3)—a principle which was seen to involve the infringement of the sabbath law. This is, in substance, the view of Moulton, Lange, Westcott, and others. To expound the *διὰ τοῦτο* by the *οὐχ' ὅτι* is (Westcott) contrary to the usage of 2 Cor. i. 24; iii. 5; Phil. iv. 17; 2 Thess. iii. 9; but it is still more against the argument. Moses did not give circumcision because it was of the fathers,—at least that is not the point; but Jesus argues that he gave circumcision as a mode of legislation which will involve a modification of his own sabbatic regimen. Stringent as was the law of the sabbath, it would have, on occasion, to yield to the more searching and stringent rule of admission into the covenant of grace. "If the sabbath could give way to a mere ceremonial law, how much more to a work of mercy, which is older and higher than any ritual!" 'Mish. Sabb.,' xix. 1, fol. 128, b, "Everything required for circumcision may be completed on the sabbath;" and so xix. 2. The reason is given: 'Midrash Tanchuma,' fol. 9, b, "The healing of a sick man dangerously ill, and circumcision, break through the sabbath sanctity."

Ver. 23.—If a man on (a) sabbath receive circumcision, which was the removal by surgical means of what was regarded as a cause and sign of physical impurity, as well as the seal of the covenant made with the family of Abraham, that his seed should be heir of the world, and that in that seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, in order that the law of Moses might not be broken. It is not without difficulty that, in the previous verse, the law of circumcision on the eighth day is declared to be older than Moses, to have come down from the fathers of the consecrated race; how, then, does he call it the law of Moses? Clearly he refers to the fact that this particular law was embodied by Moses and made part of his own code, even though in one respect it was obviously older than the particular form of the fourth commandment, and must frequently clash with the letter of that commandment. The law of Moses, then, as much as the law of the Abrahamic covenant, would have been broken by any infraction of the rule which made circumcision incumbent on the eighth day. The common custom of the people was to administer this rite on that day, even if it fell on a sabbath. "None of you keepeth the Law" in its strict integrity, said Jesus. Nay, it is certain that the older laws, which Moses endorsed and embodied in his own code, do themselves demand such violation from you. This appeal to the

spirit of the Law—the closest approach that a Jew could make to the will of God—is reproduced in Paul's Epistles (Col. ii. 11; Eph. ii. 11). Are ye then wroth with me (*χολᾷτε*, *χολᾶν* (from *χολή*, bile, gall)—to be bitter with wrath, and even mad with rage (Aristoph., 'Nub.,' 833), is found in 3 Macc. iii. 1, but not elsewhere in the New Testament)—because I made an entire man—i.e. the whole frame of the paralyzed man (not his spirit or mind in contrast with his body)—sound—or, *healthy*—on a sabbath day? The antithesis is not between healing the wound of circumcision and healing the paralytic. Of the former there does not seem the faintest trace, notwithstanding the conjecture of Lampe. Circumcision was the removal of an offending portion of the human body, the sanitary purpose of which rite was strenuously believed in, but it was a partial cleansing and actual excision of one member of the body. To accomplish this purpose Moses, by his enactment, regarded even the sabbatic law as subsidiary. Why, then, are the Jews wrathful with Jesus for making an entire man—a whole physical frame—healthy on the sabbath? The stress laid on the Authorized Version and R.T. translations, "every whit whole," by some commentators is unfortunate; for it would throw discredit on circumcision altogether, which was far from our Lord's contention here, and would reduce the force of his argument. Christ does not in this argument take up the great line of defence pursued in ch. v. Nor does he call the healing of the paralytic more than an *ἔργον*, a "work;" but it must be remembered that he had spoken on the previous occasion of his great miracles as "works," the like to which he saw the Father ever doing.

Ver. 24.—Judge not according to appearance—the superficial aspect of things, the merely formal side, the unexplained letter of the Law. "*Ὅψις ἰδὸν ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν ἰδὸν κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*" (*Ὅψις ἰδὸν ὅτι κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν* *ἰδὸν κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*). According to that, the healing and the bed-carrying consequent upon it would be a positive infraction of a certain enactment. But judge! righteous judgment. Consider the case, and see that I have done, in this act of healing, less than you are doing yourselves, notwithstanding all your punctilio, and with a higher justification. The aorist *κρίνατε* involves probably "the one true and complete decision which the case admits" (Westcott).

Vers. 25—29.—(4) *Special perplexity of some Jerusalemites, and Christ's reply.* A second scene is here described, not necessarily on the day of his first appearance in the temple, though it took place in the

<sup>1</sup> The reading *κρίνατε*, of B, D, L, T, is adopted by Tregelles.

temple (ver. 28). We see, however, a new wave of feeling. The multitude, or part of it, that gathered round him was maddened with his intimation of the murderous animosity of the authorities; but the dwellers in Jerusalem were better informed of the malignant spirit he had excited.

Ver. 25.—Therefore—by reason of his bold self-vindication—some of the Jerusalemites (this word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in Mark i. 5) were saying, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? If the multitudes of the provincials were ignorant of the design of the hierarchy, the plot was not a complete secret.

Ver. 26.—And behold he speaketh openly (see vers. 4 and 13), and they say nothing to him. They neither tackle him in argument nor refute his self-vindication, neither do they arrest him or carry out their known project. Have they altered their minds? Are they convinced of his claims? Has he successfully rebutted the charge of sabbath-breaking? Does it all vanish on close approach? Then they go a step further, which, if it were the true explanation, would entirely account for their obvious indecision. They even say to one another, with sufficient frequency for the reporter to have heard it, Can it be that the rulers<sup>1</sup> indeed know (μή ποτε ἔγνωσαν, did they at any time come to perceive? The particle expects a dubious though negative response, “we don’t think so; but is it probable? surely not!”) that this (person) is ‘the Christ? The rulers must decide this weighty matter, for us at least who dwell in Jerusalem. The question shows how widespread, how detailed, was the idea of the coming Christ. This supposition with reference to their rulers was momentary, and conflicted with another standing objection to the claims of Jesus.

Ver. 27.—Howbeit we know this Man whence he is; that is, they knew his parentage, the place of his early life, the father, mother, brothers, and sisters (Matt. xiii. 55, 56). There was none of the mystery about him which they anticipated for their Messiah. It is even intimated that it was known where he was born (vers. 41, 42), and that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem, so that the mere fact of birth-place is not the difficulty that occurred to them. A tradition had gathered, which was perhaps originated by Dan. vii. 13 or

Mal. iii. 1, that he would make a sudden descent on the temple—a dazzling appearance at his Messianic enthronization, coming in the clouds of heaven, and that none would “declare his generation.” So, according to ‘Sanh.,’ 97, a, “three things are wholly unexpected—Messiah, a god-send, and a scorpion” (cf. ‘Mid. on Cantic. ii. 9’). Justin Martyr puts into the lips of Trypho, ‘Dial.,’ 8, “But Christ—if he has indeed been born, and exists anywhere—is unknown, and does not even know himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint him and make him manifest to all.” So these Jerusalemites said, When the Christ cometh (ἐρχεται makes his Christwise manifestation—is in act of coming), no one knoweth whence he is. This Messianic manifestation has been tardy and gradual, if it be one at all. We know the home, the daily upbringing of Jesus—we know whence he is, or think we do; and so the whole affair clashes with a current expectation. We know enough, too much, of this Jesus for it to be possible for him to fill up this portion of the Messianic programme. This may have been the outcome of the general criticism. Other defects, according to their idea, may have been urged. The many-sidedness of the hope, the vagueness of the dream, as it shaped itself in current Jewish thought, suffered almost any amount of doubt as to the exact form of the approaching manifestation. That to which our Lord especially replied revealed the practical and ethical claim he advanced to their acceptance from himself of the word of the Lord.

Ver. 28.—Jesus therefore cried—lifted up his voice in such a way as to cause wide astonishment. (The word is found in ch. i. 15 of John the Baptist, and ver. 37 and ch. xii. 44; but frequently in the synoptists and Acts, and very frequently in the LXX.) The trumpet-peal sounded through the courts of the temple, and the crowds rushed in the direction from which it proceeded. He cried in the temple. This clause is added, notwithstanding the statement of ver. 14, and it intimates a break in the discourse, a sudden and trenchant response to certain loudly uttered murmurs of the Jerusalem multitude. Ye both know me, and know whence I am. Surely (with De Wette, Meyer, Westcott, Moulton) the Lord distinctly concedes to the men of Jerusalem a certain amount of superficial knowledge. It is lamentably defective in respect of that for which they imagine it all-sufficient; and yet this knowledge was highly significant and important as far as it went. Such knowledge of his birthplace and his family, his provincial training, his Galilean ministry, were all proofs to them of his humanity—that he belonged to their race,

<sup>1</sup> N here reads ἀρχιερεῖς, not followed by any modern editors, though some of the versions have both designations; the second ἀληθῶς of T.R., Griesbach, and Scholz rests on Γ, Δ, Α, and eight other later uncials, several versions, but is omitted by N, B, D, K, L, V, X, H, and by more than twenty-five cursives, by numerous versions, and modern editors.

was bone of their bone, and sympathizing in their deepest sorrows, understood their noblest aspirations. Such a concession, moreover, repudiates the supposed doctetic character of the Christ of the Fourth Gospel. Many commentators regard the exclamation as ironical and interrogatory (Grotius, Lampe, Calvin, Lücke, and even Godet), without sufficient warrant. Our Lord, however, soon shows that, though they are rightly informed about certain obvious facts, there were others of stupendous importance which could go a long way towards reconciling their many-sided and conflicting ideas of Messiah, of which they were yet in ignorance. And yet (all commentators show that there is a certain adversative force about this third *καί*; see also ver. 30; ch. viii. 20; ix. 30; Mark xii. 12) I am not come from myself (see ch. v. 30). I have not risen upon the wings of my own ambition. It is not my mere human whim and purpose, or my desire for self-glorification, which brings me before you. You may know the home of my childhood; and watched as I have been by your eager spies, as you had full right to do, you may know all my public proceedings, and yet you have not fathomed the fact that I have not come on my own errand, nor does my humanity as you have grasped it cover the whole of the facts about me. There is a peculiarity, a uniqueness, about my coming that you have yet to learn. I have been sent to you; but he that sent me is real—a reality to me, which makes it an absolute reality in itself. The use of ἀληθινός is somewhat peculiar, and, unless with some commentators and Revisers we make it equal to ἀλήθεια, and thus disturb the uniform usage of St. John, we must either imagine under the word a real “Sender,” or one really answering to the idea already announced as of *One* competent to send. “He that sent me, the Father,” of whom I spoke (ch. v. 37) when last we conversed together, is the overwhelming Reality in this case. Whom ye know not. The Jerusalem multitudes were suffering grievously from the superstitious limitations of their own faith, from the traditions, the symbolism, the letter, the form, which had well-nigh strangled, suffocated, the underlying truths. They had in many ways lost the God whose Great Name they honoured. They failed to apprehend his awful nearness to them, his love to every man, his compassion to the world, the demand of his righteousness, the condition of seeing him, the way to his rest—“*Him ye know not.*” This was a serious rebuke of the entire system which prevailed at Jerusalem. Not understanding nor knowing the Father, they were unable to see the possibility of his having sent to them, through

the life and lips of a Man whom they knew, his last and greatest message.

Ver. 29.—(But)<sup>1</sup> I know him; because I am from him—my inmost nature, the centre of my ego, proceeds, is derived, from him. I have come forth from him. There is that about me and my origin which has brought me into such intimate relations with the Father that I know him as ye do not know him (cf. ch. viii. 55)—and he (whom I thus know, and to whom I refer, ἐκεῖνος) sent me. This sending is a further condition of the knowledge which you fail to appreciate, but which would make all things plain to you. If this knowledge should break as the day-star on their darkness, would they not at once see that, up to that point at least, in their experience they did not know, or had not known, whence he was, in the grandest sense. The charge of ignorance and the claim of supernatural knowledge, Divine origin, Divine commission, was too much for those Jerusalemites. They thought it blasphemy.

Vers. 30—36.—(5) *The divided opinions and conduct of the different groups around him; the attempt on his life, and its failure.*

Ver. 30.—They sought therefore to seize him: and (equivalent to “but;” see ver. 28) no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come. It was in their heart to combine with “the Jews,” but none dared to touch him. There were political considerations, there were lingering and coarsening fires of enthusiasm burning in the hearts of those who had seen his great works; and probably an awe, a superstitious fear, of some stroke of his reputed power held them back. The evangelist once more notices the true cause of this arrest of their malignity: “The hour” for the termination of his self-revelation, for the completion of his self-surrender, the hour which to the beloved disciple’s eye was the very consummation of the ages, had not struck.

Ver. 31.—The antagonism and the faith come into sharper expression. As the spirit-like words stir up malignant passion, they also excite new and deepening confidence. The flash of lightning, which reveals to many the glory of a landscape, may strike others blind or dead. While the authorities are harder, more unspiritual and blinder, than before, yet many of the multitude—i.e. of the general crowd, whether belonging to Jerusalem or not—believed on him, passed into the glorious illumination which falls on his own Person, and all things else. We cannot say that the whole was cleared up to them, but it was an acceptance by them

<sup>1</sup> The δὲ, omitted by R.T., Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Godet, has powerful authority in its favour:  $\aleph$ , D, X, against B, L, T,  $\Delta$ .

to some extent of his Messianic claims. He was more than a mere Prophet to them, or Leader, as is obvious from the tone of the speech which follows: And they said (were saying to one another), while others, perhaps, so soon as they had taken his side, began to urge his claims on those that doubted—When the Christ shall come, will he do more signs than those<sup>1</sup> which this Man hath done?<sup>2</sup> The omission of *τοῦτων* makes the question refer to the entire group of signs which had been already performed, and not confine itself to the proceedings of Jesus in Jerusalem. They expected Messiah to give proof of his Divine commission (cf. Matt. xi. 4, 5, 20—25). Has not Jesus satisfied all reasonable claims? The question was like fire in touchwood. A conflagration might at any moment burst from the excitable throng which no decision of the Sanhedrin could repress. Something must at once be done to allay the excitement. In the crowd which was pressing the claims of Jesus were many Pharisees, an immensely larger element in the population than the chief priests, and therefore more likely at once to bring such information to the central religious authority.

Ver. 32.—The Pharisees<sup>3</sup> heard these things (generally) murmuring these things concerning him; repeating the language of those who believed, comparing their expectations with the reality. They seem to have occasioned a hasty and informal session of the Sanhedrin, and we read that the chief priests and the Pharisees<sup>4</sup> sent officers—servants “clothed with legal authority,” and therefore intimating a decision already come to in the supreme council (cf. ch. xi. 53; xviii. 3, 12; xix. 6; Acts v. 22, 26)—to seize him (cf. this description of the Sanhedrin in Matt. xxi. 45; xxvii. 62). The “chief priests”—a phrase often occurring in the writings of Luke, and here for the first time in this Gospel—cannot be confined to the official “high priest,” but may include the ex-high priests, perhaps the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests and the chiefs of the priestly party, though there is

no proof of it. The Pharisees and priests were often at enmity, but there were several occasions during our Lord's ministry when they combined against a common foe. The Pharisees had been his most steady opponents in Galilee. The eighth and ninth chapters of Matthew, with parallel passages, reveal the growing animosity of their demeanour, and their disposition to misunderstand, to oppose, and to crush every great self-revelation made by him. Their chiefs were in Jerusalem, and doubtless formed a powerful element in the great council. The formality of this session of the council may be reasonably questioned. There had been orders given for the arrest, which they had only to put at any time, if they dared, into immediate operation.

Ver. 33.—Jesus therefore said.<sup>1</sup> We are left in doubt to whom he addressed these weighty words, probably to the entire group of friends and foes. Yet a little while am I with you (six months would bring round the last Passover). The movement had not escaped him. It is as though he had said, “I see all that will happen. This is my death-struggle with those whom I am sent to teach and save. For a little while only will the possibility of approach to me for life and peace be continued. You have taken steps to shorten my career. You would even now silence me.” And I go<sup>2</sup> unto him that sent me. I am going; you are hurrying me back to the Father who sent me on this commission of instruction and of life-giving. This was in a sense enigmatical and puzzling. It might bear other meanings than the one which we now see it to have borne. It is quite extravagant of Reuss to describe the misunderstandings of Christ's hearers as an intolerable contradiction. We are not so ready or able to understand any of our Lord's words in all their fulness even now.

Ver. 34.—Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me. Many interpretations are given of this. (1) Origen and Grotius refer it to a hostile search for him which would not be gratified; but the whole story of the arrest

<sup>1</sup> *Τούτων* of T.R. is omitted by N, B, and six other uncials, forty cursives, and numerous versions, by Westcott and Hort, R.T., Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Godet.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἐνολύγε*—an instance of the aorist which clearly includes the past time up to the present moment as a completed whole.

<sup>3</sup> K, M, V, Π, add *οὖν*, N, D, add *δέ*, after *ἤκουσαν*; not accepted by modern editors.

<sup>4</sup> T.R., with later uncials, place of *Φαρισαίου* before of *ἀρχιερέων*; but N, B, D, with eight other uncials and numerous versions, give of *ἀρχιερέων* first, to the obvious advantage of the sense. So Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T., Godet, etc.

<sup>1</sup> The *αὐτοῖς* of T.R. has no authority beyond T and some few cursives to sustain it.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἔρχομαι*. Westcott calls attention to the three Greek words used in this connection for “go:” *Ἔρχομαι*, denoting the simple personal act of going away (ch. viii. 14, 21; xiii. 3, 33, 36; xiv. 4, 28; xvi. 5, 10, 16, T.R.); *πορεύομαι*, denoting purposeful going to accomplish a specific end (ver. 35; ch. xiv. 3, 12, 28; xvi. 7, 28); *ἀπέρχομαι*, indicating simple separation (ch. vi. 68; xvi. 7). Take also ch. xvi. 7—10, where the three words are brought into striking juxtaposition.

which follows, as well as the quotation of these words in ch. xiii. 33, prove that this was not his meaning. (2) Augustine and others imagine penitential seeking when it would be too late. This is not justified by the connection. The limitation of the day of grace for seeking souls is not the theme of this address, and it is, save under special circumstances, no teaching of the New Testament. (3) The ideas of Hengstenberg and others, so largely built on the great texts in Prov. i. 28 and Amos viii. 12, show that the Messiah would be sought by them when they had utterly rejected Jesus. We do not believe that a genuine search for the Lord will ever be disappointed, but a vicious and vain search may be possible when the opportunity for due approach has gone by for ever. Moments, catastrophes, did arrive in their tragic history when they had passionately desired, but in vain, to see one of the days of the Son of man. The individuals who turned to him found the veil which concealed him taken away (2 Cor. iii. 16). The nation as a whole was blinded; they crucified their King, the Lord of glory; and they brought uttermost extinction on themselves as a nation. "They sought their Messiah in vain" (Weiss). Where I am—in the glory in which I dwell, and to which I belong, and to which I am now inviting you—you cannot come. "The door will be shut;" you will not "have known the day of your visitation." "How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not!" The seeking cannot be the search of penitence, but of unavailing despair. You have the opportunity now. In a little while I go, and then you will find it impossible to follow me.

Ver. 35.—The Jews therefore said among themselves, Whither will this Man go,<sup>1</sup> that we shall not find him? With their murderous designs they are blinded even to the meaning of his words. They pretend that he was not making any reference to their sworn purpose of rejecting his claims. They would not lift their thoughts to that eternal glory in which he would soon, by their own execrable acts, be enshrouded. They could not grasp the eternal life involved in the acceptance of the Father's revelation in him. They are resolved to put ironical and confusing meaning into his words, to pour an air of contempt over his reply; and to insert veritable though unconscious prophecy of their own into his words. Will he go<sup>1</sup> to the Dispersion (of)—or, among—the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? The word "Greek" is, throughout the New Testament, the Gentile, the Pagan world, at that time so largely Greek in speech, if not in race.

<sup>1</sup> See note, ver. 33.

Another word, "Grecian" or "Hellenist," is used for the Jews who had adopted Greek ideas, habits, and speech. Whatever may be the strict meaning of that word (see Roberts's 'Discussions on the Gospels,' and other works, where that writer seeks to establish the Greek-speaking peculiarity of all Palestinian Jews, and limits the word to Greek ideas rather than to Greek speech), the word "Greek" is the antithesis to "Jew" in every respect. The Dispersion (τῆς 'ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ) may mean (1) the Jewish dispersion among the Greeks beyond the limits of Palestine (2 Macc. i. 27). It is also found in Josephus for the outcast of Israel (see LXX. Ps. cxlvi. 2; cf. Jas. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1). There was a wide "dispersion" in Babylon and Syria, throughout Persia, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Cyprus, even in Achaia, Macedonia, and Italy. The Dispersion was the Greater Israel. Most intimate relations subsisted between these scattered Israelites and their political and ecclesiastical centre in the metropolis. Often those at the greatest distance from the temple were the most passionately loyal and patriotic. But for the Messiah to commence a prophetic career among them, after having been repudiated by the great council of the nation, was a bitter sarcasm. But (2) the "Dispersion" may refer to the wide scattering of the Greeks themselves, the natural antithesis to God's covenanted people. Now (1) is certainly a very awkward and unique rendering of the genitive, and (2) applies the "dispersion" in a peculiar sense not elsewhere used. Alford says the word means the land where the Jews are scattered. Still, (2) appears to me a fair rendering of the words, especially as it is followed by "and teach the Greeks." Nothing could more adequately express the utter scorn of the Jewish mind for a pseudo-Messiah who, failing with his own people, and here in the courts of the Lord's house, would turn to the Gentiles. Such a bare supposition would bring utter discomfiture, as they thought, upon his claims. What a forecast they made in their malicious suggestions! Long before John reported this speech he himself had taken up his seat in Ephesus. In all the great cities of the empire it was avowed on both sides that "in Christ Jesus there was neither Jew nor Greek." Had not Jesus already given indication of this laxity as to the privileges of Israel: "Many shall come," etc. (Matt. viii. 11)? Had he not referred to the ministry of Elijah and Elisha severally to the Syro-Phoenician and the Syrian (Luke iv. 25—27)? Had he not shown culpable leniency to the hated Samaritan? Surely they meant to suggest the uttermost treason to the traditions of Israel, when they thus chose to put a meaning into his words. Like Caiaphas

in ch. xi. 49—51, they said and prophesied more than they knew. Archdeacon Watkins says, "The irony of history is seen in the fact that the very words of these Jews of Palestine are recorded in Greek, by a Jew of Palestine, presiding over a Christian Church in a Gentile city."

Ver. 36.—What is this word (*ῥῆμα*) which he spake, Ye shall seek me, and ye shall not find (me),<sup>1</sup> and where I am, ye cannot come? This verse is simply a repetition of the Lord's sentence, which, notwithstanding their damaging interpretation and unconscious prophecy of great events, haunted them with a weird power, and left them, as his word left the officers who were silenced and paralyzed by it, with a sense of undiscovered and awful meaning. Both here and in ver. 45 we see that the evangelist had access to the ideas and converse of the "Jews," which proves that he had special sources of information to which the ordinary synoptic tradition was strange. The thought grows upon one that John was more than the mere fisherman of the lake. He was a friend of Nicodemus, and known to Caiaphas. It is clear that some further time elapses. This conversation, of which we have the prominent items, the chief utterances, was producing its effect upon the two-sided multitude, upon "the Jews," the "Pharisees," the city party, the chief priests. The Lord probably retired once more to the house of Lazarus or of John.

Vers. 37—39.—(6) *The claim to be Organ and Giver of the Holy Spirit.*

Ver. 37.—Now on the last day, the great day of the feast. A question arises—Was the last day the seventh or the eighth day? and why was it called the great day? The question cannot be finally answered. The Feast of Tabernacles, according to Numb. xxix. 12 and Deut. xvi. 13, is said to last seven days; and, so far as the Mosaic ceremonial goes, the ceremonial of the seventh day was less imposing and festive than either of the preceding days. But Numb. xxix. 35 shows that the eighth day was also celebrated as a solemn assembly, on which no servile work could be done (cf. Lev. xxiii. 36; Neh. viii. 18). In 2 Macc. x. 6 eight days of the feast were spoken of. On the day of holy convocation the people removed or left their booths, and thus commemorated, with great rejoicing, the close of the wilderness-period and the commencement of their national history. It may, moreover, have been called "the great day" because it was the closing day of all the festivals of the year. Jose-

phus calls it "the very sacred close (*συντέπασμα*) of the year." The LXX. gives the curious translation *ἐξοδίου* for *azereth*, equivalent to "assembly." This *ἐξοδίου* Philo ('De Septenariis') describes as the end of the festivals of the sacred year. Meyer, Alford, Godet, Lange, and many others regard the eighth day as that here referred to by the word "great," and find, in the very absence of the ceremonial of drawing water from the Pool of Siloam, the occasion which provoked the reference of our Lord to his own power to meet the spiritual thirst of mankind, thus repeating what he had said to the woman of Samaria of his own grace, with further and nobler expansions. The songs which had been sung on every previous day of the feast were sung without the special rejoicings and water-ceremonial. Hence some have thought that the very contrast between the previous days and this last day, "great" in other respects, may have made the reference quite as impressive as if the following words had been spoken in some pause, or at the conclusion of the great Hallel of the seventh day. So Westcott. It should, however, be noted that Rabbi Juda (in the Gemara on 'Succah') asserts that the water-pouring took place on the eighth day as well. This is supposed, by Lange, to be inaccurate or a later addition. Edersheim, however, has given strong reasons for believing that very special ceremonial took place on the seventh day. The people, all carrying in both hands their palm, myrtle, and citron branches, divided into three companies, one of which waited in the temple, one went to Moya to fetch willow branches to adorn the altar, and a third repaired with music to the Pool of Siloam, where the priest filled his golden goblet with water, and returned, with blast of trumpet, by the water-gate, to the court of the priests. There he was joined by other priests with vessels of wine. The water was poured into the silver funnel, and at this act burst forth the great Hallel (Ps. cxiii.—cxviii.) in responsive chorus. The people shook their palm branches as they sang the words, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord." On the last day, the great day of the feast, the priests compassed the altar seven times before the sacrifices were kindled, and the songs accompanying the ceremony of this day were called "the great Hosanna." As the people left the temple they shook off their willow leaves on the altar, and beat their palm branches to pieces. Edersheim thinks that it was at the moment when the pause after the great Hallel occurred that Jesus lifted up his voice, and there is much probability in the suggestion. Alford, accepting the *non-pouring* of the water on the eighth day, considers that the very absence of

<sup>1</sup> The *με* is introduced, not by Tischendorf (8th edit.), but by R.T. and Lachmann, on the authority, mainly, of B, G, T, 1, and three versions.

that ceremonial provided the opportunity for the great utterance which follows. Chrysostom says, on the eighth day, "when they were returning home, he giveth them supplies." Jesus stood and cried—adopting an unusual attitude of command, and unaccustomed energy of voice (ch. i. 35 and ver. 28, note)—"If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. Christ thus identifies himself with the deepest meaning of the Old Testament and the Hebrew ritual. The sabbath and the temple found the highest expression of their meaning in his life and work. Godet thinks that the underlying reference here was to that of which the ceremonial was a memorial, and pointed to the smiting of the rock in the wilderness, from whose hidden depths the rushing waters flowed. The cry, "If any man thirst," might certainly recall the terrible drought in the wilderness, though there does not seem to me any definite reference to it in what follows. The libation of water was certainly not offered to the multitudes to drink, but the ritual use of water treats it as an element absolutely essential to our human life. The people gave thanks that they had reached a land where fell the early and latter rain, and fountains and wells and springs of living water ran. Christ offered more than all—the utter final quenching of all torturing thirst. The people sang Isa. xii. 3, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." He said, "Come to me," and your joy shall be full. To the woman at the well he had said that the water he would give should be in the soul as a well of water springing up into eternal life. But in this connection he promised a much more precious gift.

Ver. 38.—*He that believeth on me.* The *ὁ πιστεύων* in the nominative absolute, followed by another construction, gives great force to the mighty words. This is not the first time that Christ has represented believing under the form of both "coming" and "drinking." The one term seems to cover that part of faith in Christ which unites the soul to him, which sides with him, which utterly abandons self to take his word as true and his power as sufficient; the other term, when applied to participation in his blood, implies receiving into the soul the full solace of his imparted life. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall rush torrents of living water.* From his newly given, divinely imparted life shall proceed, as from the innermost depths of his consciousness, illimitable supplies of refreshment and fertility for others as well. Each soul will be a rock smitten in the thirsty land, from which crystal rivers of life-giving grace shall flow. Godet urges, against Meyer, the

great sufficiency of this particular illustration of the rock in the wilderness as justifying the reference to the phrase, "as the Scripture hath said," and points especially to Exod. xvii. 6, "Behold, I will stand before thee there . . . in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and out of it (αὐτοῦ) water shall come, that the people may drink" (cf. Numb. xx. 11; Deut. viii. 15; Ps. cxiv. 8; passages read during the feast). He thinks the *κοιλίας αὐτοῦ* corresponds with "from out of it" of Exodus. Hengstenberg laid long and fantastic emphasis on the *Canticles*, where the *κοιλία* of the bride of Jehovah is described. It is certain that the numerous passages in the Old Testament, in which the gift of refreshing water is made the symbol of national mercies and spiritual blessings, do, for the most part, fall short of this remarkable expression. Still, Isa. xlv. 3; iv. 1; lviii. 11; Joel iii. 18; Zech. xiv. 8, all more or less approach the thought; but Ezek. xlvii. 1—12, where from the altar the living, health-giving, mighty river flows for the healing of the nations, is so akin to the saying of the Lord, as soon as we recognize the fact that he is greater than the temple, and that his Church is God's temple, and each body of man a temple of the Holy Ghost, that all real difficulty vanishes. The whole history of the Church is one continuous comment and illustration of the exhaustless fulness of his Word. Just as a soul of man comes and drinks of the water of life, he becomes himself a perennial source of life to others. He supplies not cisterns of stagnant water, but rivers of living water (Rom. viii. 9—11; 1 Cor. iii. 16). Chrysostom adds, "One may perceive what is meant, if he will consider the wisdom of Stephen, the tongue of Peter, the vehemence of Paul; how nothing withstood them—not the anger of multitudes, nor the uprising of tyrants, nor plots of devils, nor daily deaths—but, as rivers borne along with loud rushing sound, they went on their way."

Ver. 39.—This spake he, said the evangelist, concerning the Spirit, which they that believe<sup>1</sup> on him were to receive: for the (Holy) Spirit<sup>1</sup> was not yet (given<sup>1</sup>), because

<sup>1</sup> T.R., with Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Alford, on the authority of N, D, X, Γ, Δ, and other uncials, almost all cursives, the Vulgate, and numerous quotations, etc., reads *πιστεύοντες*; the R.T., with Tregelles, Lachmann, Westcott and Hort, on the authority of B, L, T, and some minor authorities, reads *πιστεύσαντες*. Again, T.R. has *πνεῦμα ἅγιον δεδομένον*. Lachmann added the *δεδομένον* with the Italic Versions; but this, with other additions and variants, is found in sundry versions, throwing doubt upon them all, as N, K, Γ, H, 42, 91. Origen

Jesus was not yet glorified. This verse has a great weight, as the evangelist's interpretation of the previous words of the Lord, nor can they be put aside. The history of the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, and the mighty gift of the risen and glorified Jesus to those who believed on him, are their abundant justification. If the thirty-eighth verse were not an immense advance upon the promise of the thirty-seventh verse, it would not be easy to show how the words of the first promise could only find fulfilment in a future and as yet unrealized condition. Eternal life is a present gift. Satisfaction of the thirst of the soul was an immediate bestowment of Christ, and had been realized by untold multitudes of those who had been inwardly cleansed by the Spirit, who had come to the waters of life, who had received the Logos, and known that they were sons of God. But the thirty-eighth verse speaks of a new and nobler life flowing to others from belief in Christ. It looks forward to the production of a worldwide blessing conditioned by what was yet to happen. So that we cannot doubt that John saw more deeply into the Lord's words than some of those who have criticized his comment. John, says Weiss, does "not mean to explain the metaphor of the living water, but he intends to prove the truth of Jesus' promise from his own blessed experience." "*The (Holy) Spirit was not yet*" is, however, a strange and startling statement. The work and Person of the Spirit are spoken of throughout the Old Testament—from Gen. i. 2; vi. 3; Job xxvi. 13; xxxiii. 4; Ps. civ. 30; xxxix. 7; to Zech. iv. 6. The redeeming and renewing, quickening powers of the Spirit are represented as equipping judges, artists, warriors, and prophets for their work, as sanctifying the individual soul (Ps. li. 11; Ezek. iii. 24, 27), and building the temple of God (Hag. ii. 5). The prophetic gift is especially referred to the Spirit by St. Paul (1 Cor. xii. 10, 11; 2 Pet. i. 21; *πάντα γραφή* is *Θεόπνευστος*, 2 Tim. iii. 16). More than this, our Lord himself is, in the synoptic Gospels, said to be conceived by the Holy Spirit, and his humanity baptized and anointed, empowered and directed throughout by the Spirit, and kept by him in

and Cyril read *πνεῦμα* by itself; some manuscripts, L, X, Γ, read *ἄγιον*; others, *τὸ ἄγιον*. R.T., Westcott and Hort, Meyer, and Godet accept the reading of N; i.e. without any addition, on the ground that, while the simple reading explains all the additions to it, in the numerous groups of manuscripts, etc., it is difficult to imagine how the shorter form could have been derived from any of the longer forms. Tregelles brackets *ἄγιον*.

sacred consecration and personal union with the Logos. The union of the Divine and human nature of Christ is maintained by that same Spirit who is the union of the Father and of the Son. In what sense can it be said, "the Holy Spirit was not yet"? Our Lord himself has thrown most light upon this perplexing saying when, on promising the Paraclete, he said, "He shall not speak of [or, 'from'] himself: he will take of mine, and show unto you" (ch. xvi. 13, 14); and when he declared (ch. xvi. 7—10) that he must himself go to the Father, resume his antenatal glory, carry our nature, dishonoured by man, but now clothed with an infinite majesty, to the very throne of God, as the condition of the gift of the Paraclete. There was, in the constitution of nature, in the order of providence, in the revelations of the prophets, in the Person of the Son of man, that wherewith the blessed Spirit was ever and ceaselessly working; but not until the atonement was made, till God had glorified his Son Jesus, not until the Person of the God-Man was constituted in its infinity of power and perfection of sympathy, were the facts ready, were the truths liberated for the salvation of men, were the streams of living water ready to flow from every heart that received the Divine gift. In comparison with all previous manifestation of the Spirit, this was so wonderful that John could say of all that had gone before—"not yet," "not yet." The Baptist's expression, "I knew him not" (see note, ch. i. 31), and the scene described in ch. xx. 21, 22, do not contradict this (see note). This is the first time that John mentions the glorification of the Son of man. Jesus certainly looked at his death, with what followed it, as his glory (see ch. xii. 23, etc.; xiii. 31; xvii. 5). This evangelist does not, so clearly as St. Paul (says Westcott), discriminate the two stages of "humiliation" and "glory" (cf. Phil. ii. with 1 John iii. 5, 8).

Vers. 40—53.—(7) *The conflict among the hearers, and divers results of this series of discourses. The Sanhedrin and its officers.*

Ver. 40.—Either "some," or "certain," or "many"<sup>1</sup> must be supposed to complete the text of the oldest manuscripts. [Certain] of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words (*ἀδύων*, referring to vers. 37, 38), said, This is of a truth the Prophet. In all probability "the Prophet" predicted by Deut. xvii. 15, whom the Lord God would raise up to them (cf. Acts iii. 22; notes, ch. i. 21 and vi. 14). This was one of the

<sup>1</sup> R.T., Tregelles, Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Meyer exclude, with N, B, L, T, X, and numerous versions, *πολλοί*. It is retained in T.R., Γ, Δ, Δ, Π, with other versions.



grand features of the Old Testament conception of the Coming One. Whether even the wisest of them had learned to combine all these features of Prophet, Priest, and King, of Shiloh, of the Branch of the Lord, of the Lamb of God, and Prince of Peace, into one individual, is open to doubt. They might believe that their eyes saw much, and yet wait for more (cf. John the Baptist's message from the prison).

Ver. 41.—Others said, This is the Christ. These must have pressed the argument further. The Lord must have seemed to them to combine the yet more explicit signs, not only of the Prophet that should come into the world, but of the anointed King and Priest—the Christ of their current expectation. But some<sup>1</sup> said, Doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Here criticism was at once at work upon obvious appearances, but misunderstood facts. Was he not called "Jesus of Nazareth"? His life had been spent there, his ministry in the main restricted to the northern province. These questions give a vivid scene and portray a great emotion. The people are resting on the letter of prophecy (Micah v. 2), where the Messiah, as understood by their own teachers (see Matt. ii. 5), was to proceed from Bethlehem; but they overlook the remarkable prediction in Isa. ix. 1, where Galilee is spoken of as the scene of extraordinary illumination.

Vers. 42, 43.—Hath not the Scripture said, That the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was? Therefore a division arose in the multitude because of him. De Wette, Baur, Weiss, Keim, and others have tried to prove from this that the evangelist was ignorant of Christ's birth at Bethlehem. "Hilgenfeld candidly owns that this passage assumes the author's knowledge of this very fact" (Godet). It was unknown to the multitude, who were not at that moment aware how this argument would ultimately be pressed by the first preachers of the gospel. John leaves the objection unanswered, because he knew that all his readers, familiar with the synoptic narrative, would answer it for themselves. As respects the well-known belief current in John's later years, and confirmed by the ecclesiastical tradition of Hegesippus (Eusebius, 'Hist. Eccl.' iii. 19, 20), that the relatives of Jesus were summoned, as descendants of David, into the Emperor Domitian's presence, it is clear that Jesus was believed to be the humble heir of David's throne and family, so that his readers would see that he fulfilled not only the prophecy

of Micah v. 2, but those of Isa. xi. 1 and Jer. xxiii. 5, passages which anticipate the Messiah's descent from David. These were minor points in the great *tableau* of John's Gospel. He who believed with overwhelming conviction that Jesus was the *Logos* made flesh, the Son of God, and the risen and glorified Lord, bestowing the Spirit of his own wondrous Person upon his Church, would not trouble much about these mistakes of the people concerning the ancillary details of his earthly career which, when he wrote, had become universally known. It was, however, instructive, half a century later, to see how flimsy, unvarnished, and worthless the objections were which passed from lip to lip at this crisis in the life of our Lord. A Greek of the time of Hadrian would be surely very unlikely to have represented this condition of the Jerusalem mind. Now, some of those who believed that he was a great Prophet, the predicted Prophet, yet refused to agree with others who hailed him as the Christ. The division or violent party-split (*σχίσμα*) in the crowd on that "last great day of the feast" may have had persons friendly to him on both sides; but on one side at least there were those who were ready to side with Pharisees and "Jews" and lay hands upon him.

Ver. 44.—And some of them; i.e. of those who refused to accord him Messianic reception because he had not commenced his ministry at Bethlehem, and had not flaunted his Davidic ancestry. Some of the multitude were ready on their own account to act, or at least to aid or abet the baffled officers of state in their task: would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him. The same mysterious power, the same conflicting fear of the result among the enthusiastic crowd then waving their palm branches and shouting "the great Hosanna," nay, the all-wise providence of God, restrained them yet again. "His hour was not yet come."

Vers. 45, 46.—In ver. 32 we learn that Pharisees and chief priests had sent "officers" to lay hands on him, to seize their opportunity for an arrest; but, sharing somewhat the outburst of enthusiasm which wavered between his claims to be the Prophet or the Christ, and only subsided for a moment on a miserable and unvarnished plea, they did not dare to execute the command of their masters. The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees (the absence of the article *τοῖς* before *φαρασαίους* shows that they were regarded as one body, who had charged these officers to undertake the duty in which they signally failed); and they (*ἐκεῖνοι*, the latter) said to them, Why did ye not bring him? Foiled in their intention to carry out the order of the committee

<sup>1</sup> B.T. and Tregelles, with B. I, T, X, read *οἱ δὲ* instead of *ἄλλοι* of Tischendorf (8th edit.). *ἄλλοι δὲ* is the reading of T.R.

of the council, they return empty-handed, and to some extent baffled and chagrined. They had fallen into the dominant enthusiasm of the crowd for a moment. They had heard the shouts which hailed him as the great Prophet, nay, as Messiah himself, and their reply, according to the curtailed text, was, *Never man so spake.*<sup>1</sup> It matters little whether the additional clause, "as this Man speaks," was in the original text or not, the idea is the same; and it confirms the supposition to which we have often referred—that John only gives us the great sentences which the Divine Lord made the text of a discourse. An overwhelming impression was produced that the Speaker had a deep secret to disclose, vast treasure to bestow, unlimited power to meet the thirst of man, and even to make those who utterly yield to his influence the fountains of benedictions to others. An awe as of unseen things fell on the officers and the people. They could not resist the sense of benediction which, like some sacred perfume, some supernatural glamour, fell upon them in his royal words. "Never man thus spake." The whole experience is new and wonderful. "These sayings of the Prophet of Nazareth are more than words; they have living powers; they have confounded and disarmed us."

Ver. 47.—The Pharisees therefore answered them. Evidently the Pharisees were the leading spirits in this assault upon Jesus. The guardians of the orthodoxy of Israel, in the haughty pride of their order, are piqued and angry. *Have ye also*—the chosen servants of the august council of the nation—been led astray? In Matt. xxvii. 63 these Pharisees speak of the Divine Lord as "this deceiver (*ἡγούμενος ὁ πλάνους*)."<sup>2</sup> Are folly and weakness, if not treachery and corruption, at work so near the centre of our authority?

Ver. 48.—Hath any one of the rulers believed on him, or of the Pharisees? They soon find they have reckoned on the emphatic negative of the query (*μή τις*;) too soon. There is, however, a touch of weakness in the question. They seem to say, if one of the rulers, one of the Pharisees, had taken a different course, there might be some colour for the pusillanimity of the officers. The question which they put, thus

expecting a negative answer, might be answered differently. There were Pharisees who had shown some sympathy with Jesus. Certain steps, moreover, taken by him were not so hopelessly hostile to their own views. In their momentary animosity, blinded by passion, they are ready to ignore this and other facts as well. Some of the higher classes in Galilee had already admitted his claims (see ch. iv. 46; Luke vii. 36, etc.). The language of the Pharisees has been a stock objection to every great spiritual movement in its beginning. The writer thus reveals a knowledge of proceedings to which he must have had some exceptional means of access. The obvious familiarity which he suggests with Nicodemus and with friends in the high priest's palace (ch. xviii. 15) is the simplest explanation.

Ver. 49.—But this multitude, which knoweth not the Law, are accursed.<sup>1</sup> This is a most contemptuous expression—*am-ha-'arez*, equivalent to "this scum of the earth," "the unlettered rabble." The Pharisees were accustomed to show sovereign contempt for those who had no admission to their own culture and methods of knowledge. Ederheim and Wünsche quote 'Pes.' 49, b; 'Baba,' B. 8, b; and 'Chetub,' iii. 6 in proof of the utter inhumanity of their judgments. This language did not endorse a formal excommunication of the multitude—a supposition in its own nature impossible and absurd—but it expressed the brusque and harsh contempt with which the Pharisees then present wished to correct the weak compliance of their own servants. Lange presses the utterance too far. We cannot see in it more than the bitter outburst of their pent-up spite.

Vers. 50, 51.—They were hardly prepared for what followed; for one of their own order, one of their "rulers," "the teacher of Israel," a chief among the Pharisees, opens his lips to speak to them, and to call for a halt in their rash proceedings. He did not go far, but he directed attention to a fundamental principle of that very "Law" which the Pharisaic party were ignoring. Nicodemus saith to them (he who came to him formerly, although being one of them).<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> N\*, B, L, T, X, 8, 33, read, *οὐδέποτε ἐλάλησεν οὕτως ἄνθρωπος*, and they are followed by Lachmann, Tischendorf (6th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T.; but N\* adds the old appendage, *ὡς οὗτος λαλεῖ ὁ ἄνθρωπος*, which is the reading also of X, Γ, Δ, Π, and many other uncials and versions, and is followed by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Tregelles, Alford, Meyer, Godet, etc. Weym. brackets the *ὡς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος*.

JOHN.

<sup>1</sup> Lachmann, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T. here read *ἐπάρατοί*, the classical form, not elsewhere found in the New Testament, with N, B, T, 1, 33, and one or two quotations; T.R., *ἐπικατάρατοι*, with almost all the other authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Tischendorf (8th edit.), on the authority of N\*, omits the bracketed clause altogether. Lachmann, Alford, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and R.T. retain *ὁ ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν πρότερον*, with B, L, T, and some

parenthesis shows the author's strong recollection of the scene (ch. iii. 1, etc.), when the Lord had opened to his own mind, as well as to Nicodemus, the mystery of the kingdom, and the need of that very Spirit's power to which (John knew when he wrote that) the Lord was referring in his great discourse. Nicodemus had not proclaimed his own discipleship, but he meant to cover and shield the enthusiastic crowd from the sting of the cruel condemnation of this Pharisaic junta. Doth our Law judge a<sup>1</sup> man except it have first heard from himself, and have come to know what he doeth? (Exod. xxiii. 1 margin, "Thou shalt not receive a false report;" Deut. i. 16, "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother"). The Law is here personified in the person of the judge. The process is not followed by this hasty *ex-parte* statement. The Law is traversed by this forgetfulness of the first principle of justice as between man and man. They might have rejoined that they *did* know the teaching and the work of Jesus. They had been following him by their representatives, and were now witnesses of his extraordinary assumptions, and had evidence enough on which to proceed. The retort which they made is sufficient proof of the defective and passion-blinded method of their own procedure. Moreover, it shows that the prophetic rank assigned to the Lord Jesus was the main question in the mind of Nicodemus and his Pharisaic companions. The rules for the judgment of a prophet were stringent, and no attempt had been made to put these prophetic claims to the test (Deut. xviii. 19—22). Moreover, they ran off upon an utterly false tack, and were not free from inaccuracy in their solemn appeal to Holy Scripture.

Ver. 52.—They answered and said to him, Art thou also, as he is and his supporters are, from Galilee? and, therefore, is this criticism of yours on our baffled plan the dictate of provincial pride? They sought to fix a contemptuous country-cousin sobriquet upon this distinguished man, instead of replying to his sensible inquiry. Search, and see,

versions. T.R., with E, G, H, M, etc., some Italic Versions, Vulgate, and Syriac, reads *νικητός* instead of *πρότερον*; so Godet (cf. ch. xix. 39).

<sup>1</sup> For this use of the definite article, see Matt. xv. 11. T.R. reads, *παρ' αὐτοῦ πρότερον*, with a great array of later uncials. The reading of R.T., with Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Alford, and Westcott and Hort, is *πρώτον παρ' αὐτοῦ*.

that out of Galilee ariseth<sup>1</sup> no prophet. The present tense has very nearly the force of the perfect, and denotes the general rule of the Divine providence in the matter. The prophetic order can scarcely be thought to have been recruited from the northern province. Even Hosea had his origin in Samaria. Amos was an inhabitant of Tekoah; twelve miles south of Jerusalem. Nahum the Elkoshite cannot be proved to have sprung from the Galilaean town of Elkosh; though it is not impossible, it is at least probable, that Elkosh in Assyria, on the Tigris, two miles north of Mosul and south of Nineveh, was the place whence Nahum and his prophecies issued. Elijah the Tishbite, of the land of Gilead, cannot be claimed as a Galilaean. The case is different with reference to Jonah of Gath-Hepher, of the tribe of Zebulun (2 Kings xiv. 25), who, as a solitary and by no means morally impressive character, might almost as an exception prove the truth of the general statement. The historical error is far from difficult to account for in the stress of the discontent which these Pharisees were now manifesting towards everything Galilaean. Godet, on the authority of *ἐγγύεσται* being the text, would have it that "there has not now arisen in the Person of Jesus a Prophet." Baumein presses this still further, by making the "prophet" mean "the Messiah." There is no reasonable ground for charging on these Pharisees "an incredible ignorance or incomprehensible misunderstanding." Such a charge is more like one of the incomprehensible misunderstandings of the modern critical school whenever a chance opens of assailing the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel.

Ver. 53.—They went every man to his own house. This clause belongs to the *pericope* of the woman taken in adultery, and is encumbered with the textual and other difficulties involved in that paragraph. The words apply most imperfectly to the preceding narrative, which terminates with a private conversation between Nicodemus and other members of the Sanhedrin, and, at the same time, rather suggest the scattering of the crowd or the return of the pilgrims to Galilee, both of which form a very improbable consequence of ver. 52.

<sup>1</sup> The present, *ἐγγύεσται*, is preferred by Tregelles, Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott, and R.T., on the authority of N, B, D, K, S, etc., about thirty cursives, the Vulgate and numerous versions; the perfect, *ἐγγύεσται*, by T.R., with E, G, M, and numerous cursives.

## HOMILETICS.

**Ver. 1.—Our Lord's stay in Galilee.** Notwithstanding the discouragements of the last few days, he continued to reside in Galilee. "And after these things Jesus continued to abide in Galilee: for he would not abide in Judæa, because the Jews sought to kill him."

**I. HE TOOK NEEDFUL PRECAUTION TO SAVE HIS LIFE.** 1. *He could have put forth miraculous power for its preservation*, but he practised that economy of miracle which is so manifest throughout his whole ministry. 2. *He refused to expose himself to premature risk at the hands of his Judæan enemies.* They "sought to kill him." He acted upon the counsel he gave to his disciples, that when persecuted in one city they should flee to another. He would not decline risk when his hour was come, but meanwhile he used all prudence to avert danger.

**II. HIS CONTINUED MINISTRY IN GALILEE.** 1. *Though discouraged by the defection of so many disciples, he continues to minister in Galilee.* 2. *His life was secure among the Galilæans.* The difference between the Galilæans and the Jews was that, while the Jews were actively hostile, the Galilæans were merely indifferent.

**Vers. 2—10.—The appeal to Jesus on the part of his unbelieving brothers.**

**I. THE OCCASION OF THIS APPEAL.** "But the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand." 1. *It was the last and greatest of the three yearly feasts*, and occurred in our month of October. 2. *It was intended at once to commemorate the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, and also to celebrate the ingathering of the yearly harvest.* 3. *The pilgrims, as well as the inhabitants of Jerusalem, left their houses for seven days to dwell in tents made of boughs.* The feast was at once a solemn and a happy time.

**II. THE APPEAL OF THE BROTHERS.** "Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest." 1. *Who were these brothers?* They are not disciples, for they expressly exclude themselves from this class by their own words (ver. 3). The evangelist says expressly (ver. 5) they were not believers, and Jesus implies by his answer that they are not, for the hatred of the world could not touch them (ver. 7). The head of the brethren was James, afterwards chief pastor at Jerusalem. 2. *It is this unbelieving attitude that explains their appeal.* "For neither did his brethren believe in him." (1) They are, no doubt, afterwards found identified with the cause of Christ (Acts i. 14), probably drawn to him by our Lord's appearance after his resurrection to James (1 Cor. xv. 7). (2) The appeal of the brethren was not dictated either (a) by the unnatural desire to see him sacrificed to the fury of his enemies, (b) nor by an eagerness to precipitate events in his own honour, (c) but rather by their anxiety to put an end to the equivocal position in which he stood in their eyes. (a) They had known him so familiarly from childhood that his claims were hard to understand. (b) They thought that he ought to submit his claims to Messiahship to those most competent to judge of their value. "For no man doeth anything in secret"—Galilee was an obscure corner of the land, far from the centre of ecclesiastical interest—"himself seeking to be famous. If thou doest these things, show thyself to the world." (γ) The capital was the appropriate place for the recognition of his mission, and the approaching feast presented a favourable opportunity for making it known to Jews from all parts of the world.

**III. OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO THE APPEAL.** 1. *His time was not yet come.* "My time is not yet come." (1) This refers to the period of his final manifestation, only to end in his death. If he were to comply with the request of his brothers, he would only anticipate that period; but his time for leaving the world was not yet come. (2) Our Lord regards the events of life as divinely ordered in point of time. "Our times are in thy hand." (3) He marks the necessary contrast between his own position and that of his brothers. "But your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that its works are evil." (a) There was nothing discordant between the views of the brethren and the views of the world. There was a moral sympathy between them that made it impossible his brothers should risk anything by going to the feast. (b) The world's hatred to Christ had its origin in his

faithful testimony against its evil. He had roused its antagonism by his rebukes of Pharisaic hypocrisy and wickedness. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The works were evil, (a) because they were done, not according to Divine command, but according to the tradition of the elders; (b) because they were done from a wrong principle, not from faith and love; (c) because they were done with a wrong motive, not the glory of God, but "to be seen of men." 2. *He commands his brothers to go up to the feast.* "Go ye up unto this feast: for me, I go not up to this feast, because my time is not yet fully come." (1) He urges his brethren to go up, as it was a matter of necessary Jewish observance. (2) He signifies certainly that he will not accompany them, like one going to the feast. And he does not go up with his brethren. (3) His going up will be as a "prophet" (ver. 14) appearing suddenly in the temple. (4) The emphasis that he lays on "this feast" implies that he is not going up in the sense which the proposal of his brethren might suggest—as if his Messianic entry into Jerusalem were to occur at the Feast of Tabernacles, and not at the Feast of the Passover. It was true, in any case, that his "time was not yet fully come," not in allusion to the two or three days' interval between their going and his coming, but to the time of his death. 3. *Our Lord's secret departure for Jerusalem.* "When he had said these words unto them, he abode in Galilee. But when his brethren were gone up to the feast, then went he also up." The passage does not say that he went up to the feast at all. Contrast the privacy of this journey with the publicity of his solemn final entry into Jerusalem (ch. xii. 12).

Vers. 11—13.—*Inquiries and speculations concerning Christ.* His entry was so private as to be almost unnoticed.

I. THE ANXIETY OF THE HOSTILE JEWS TO DISCOVER HIM. "Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?" 1. *The question may have been asked partly through curiosity and partly from hostility*, for it implies that a plot already existed for his destruction. 2. *Mark the contemptuous form of the question.* "Where is he?" His name is not mentioned, as if to say, "Where is this fellow?" But the very form of the question implies that he was widely known, and present to all minds at Jerusalem.

II. THE DIVERGENCE OF OPINION CONCERNING HIM AMONG THE WORSHIPPERS AT THE FEAST. "And there was much murmuring among the multitudes concerning him." As if men were afraid to speak out their inward thoughts. Mark the contrast here as elsewhere between those who are drawn to him and those who are repelled from him. 1. *Mark the form of the favourable judgment upon him.* "Some said, He is a good Man." They tested his principles by his deeds. As one who "went about every day doing good," he appeared as the Author of deeds that spoke of goodness and kindness and love. 2. *Mark the form of the unfavourable judgment upon him.* "Others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people." He rejected Moses' Law, despised the sabbath, made himself equal with God. This judgment sets at nought the argument from Christ's personal life. It is a judgment against the facts. 3. *Mark the pressure of official opinion upon the whole people.* "Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews." (1) Authority had not yet formally determined the question of Christ's claims. (2) The fear of man, "that bringeth a snare," has a strong hold upon people with undecided convictions.

Vers. 14—18.—*Justification of his doctrine.* Jesus appeared suddenly in the temple, and began at once to instruct the people.

I. ASTONISHMENT OF THE JEWS AT HIS TEACHING. "And the Jews were astonished, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" 1. *They were astonished at the manner of his teaching.* "He spake as never man spake;" he "spoke as One having authority, and not as the scribes;" thus "the common people heard him gladly." These passages give an idea of the manner and effect of his teaching. 2. *They were astonished at the matter of his teaching.* He had not, they thought, been trained in any rabbinic school, yet he seemed to understand the literature of his countrymen—which was essentially theological—quite as well as their approved religious guides.

II. OUR LORD'S EXPLANATION OF HIS TEACHING. "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me." 1. *His doctrine was not self-originated*, though he had studied in no school of the rabbis. 2. *It was not human*; for it was from the Source of all truth, God himself. 3. *He claims to be merely the Messenger of his Father*. He is the Word of God, who reveals the Father's mind to men.

III. THE METHOD OF VERIFYING THE DOCTRINE. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." There is a twofold method of verification—one internal, the other external. 1. *The internal verification*. (1) It springs from the disposition or desire to do the will of God. (a) The will of God represents all that is included in doctrine and duty, but it specifically regards man's salvation. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. iv. 3). (b) It is not deed, but will, that holds the primary place in Christian life. The will represents the motive power; the deed is but the outcome of the will. Yet they are inseparably linked in the designs of grace as well as in the experience of the saints—"for it is God that worketh in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure." (2) The will to do the Divine will is the only condition of Christian insight. We cannot understand a sensation or a feeling in another man unless we have the radical element of that feeling or sensation in ourselves. Even the heathen Aristotle says, "The mind's eye is not capable of rightly judging without moral virtue." It follows from this fact that (a) unbelief is more the fault of the heart than of the intellect. Therefore Scripture speaks expressively "of the evil heart of unbelief" (Heb. iii. 12). (b) Religion is essentially a matter of life as well as of thought. Therefore the Jews could not understand the will of God concerning the Messiah, for they were altogether out of sympathy with it. (c) Faith is, therefore, not the result of a logical operation. It is "the gift of God;" it is "given to us to believe." (3) The man who is in sympathy with God's will is, therefore, in a position to determine experimentally whether the doctrine of Christ is of God, or whether he is an impostor uttering merely human teaching. 2. *The external verification*. "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him." This points to the character of him who delivers the doctrine. (1) The false teacher seeks the praise of men for his own exaltation. The scribes and the Pharisees exulted in their traditions and their glosses and their interpretations of the Bible. (2) The true teacher seeks the glory of God, which is the one object of the Bible from beginning to end. This supreme aim attests at once (a) the truth of the teacher in the sphere of thought, and (b) his righteousness in the sphere of action. Thus Jesus can be "no deceiver of the people." Therefore his doctrine is to be received.

Vers. 19—24.—*Justification of his conduct*. The allusion to unrighteousness is the point of transition from Christ's teaching to his conduct.

I. HE IS CHARGED BY THE JEWS WITH BREAKING THE SABBATH LAW. 1. *He had healed the impotent man at a former visit to Jerusalem on the sabbath day*. "I have done one work, and ye all marvel." 2. *The Jews would have stoned him as a transgressor for the act*. "Why do ye seek to kill me?" He knows the designs of the rulers, though the multitude may not have suspected them, and therefore say, "Thou hast a devil: who seeketh to kill thee?" But Jesus meekly passes over the reproach without a reply.

II. HE RETORTS UPON THE JEWS EXACTLY THE SAME CHARGE. "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" He refers to the sabbath law, and shows that it allowed circumcision to be performed on the sabbath. "For this cause hath Moses given you circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers); and on the sabbath ye circumcise a man." 1. *They ought not, therefore, to condemn in Jesus what they approved in Moses*; for the healing of the impotent man was as necessary as the circumcision of a child on the sabbath. 2. *The principle he lays down derives its force from the fact that "the sabbath was made for man"*. Man is more than the sabbath. 3. *The fairness of Christ's argument*. "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." The *argumentum ad hominem* is (1) effective as closing the mouth of an objector, (2) and ought to prepare the way for an impartial judgment on the merits.

**Vers. 25—29.—The true origin of our Lord.** The opportunity again arises of asserting his Divine origin.

**I. THE PERPLEXITY OF THE JERUSALEM JEWS RESPECTING THE POLICY AND VIEWS OF THEIR RULERS.** "Then said some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? And, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing to him."

1. *The question is put, not by the Jews from foreign lands, who were attending the feast, but by Jews of the city, who understood the various phases of change in the temper and attitude of the rulers toward Christ.* 2. *They were aware of the plot formed at the Passover before the last to kill him.* 3. *They were puzzled to account for the passiveness of the religious guides of the nation, in presence of provocations so stinging as these supplied by our Lord's rebukes.* They are almost disposed to believe that the rulers recognize Jesus as the Messiah. "Do the rulers indeed perceive that he is the Christ?" 4. *Their own obstinate resistance to such a view.* "Howbeit, we know this man whence he is: but the Christ, when he comes, no one will know whence he is." They professed to know the parentage and family of Jesus, identifying them with Galilee; but they held that the origin of the Messiah would be utterly unknown. He would appear suddenly as an adult, like another Melchizedek, "without father, without mother." The Scriptures plainly pointed out the tribe, the family, the lineage, the place of the Messiah's birth. Yet they said, "When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." The nature of their ignorance is soon made manifest.

**II. OUR LORD'S EXPLANATION OF THE JEWS' PERPLEXITY.** "Ye both know me, and know whence I am." 1. *He asserts that they knew him as a man.* 2. *But asserts at once that they did not recognize his Divine nature.* (1) They did not acknowledge his essential Sonship. "But I know him: for I am from him"—implying that his knowledge of his Father arose from his community of nature with him. (2) They did not acknowledge his Divine mission. "He hath sent me." (3) They were not only ignorant of the Son, but also of the Father. "He that sent me is true, whom ye know not." (a) It was a severe thing to charge the Jews with ignorance of that God whose worship was their boast. (b) The truth of the Father was staked upon the Messianic mission of the Son. Therefore, to deny Christ was to exclude the Father from the range of their knowledge.

**Vers. 30—36.—The effect of our Lord's teaching on the rulers and on the multitude.** His claim to be sent from God roused the anger of the rulers.

**I. THE ACTION OF THE RULERS.** "Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands upon him, because his hour was not yet come." 1. *Their efforts are for the present limited to plots against his life.* The faithful witness to the truth is always exposed to the risk of persecution by a world with no love for the truth. 2. *Their efforts are restrained by a Divine hand which can "restrain the wrath of men."* "His time was not yet come." (1) There is an allotted time for each individual life. God has appointed the days of man, and fixed the bounds that he cannot pass. The time of Christ's death was not only foreseen but foreordained. (2) The second causes through which the Lord baffled for the time the plots of the rulers were, probably, the divisions of opinion in the multitude, the growing popularity of Jesus, and, just as probably, the majesty of his presence and his speech.

**II. THE RESPONSE OF THE MULTITUDE TO OUR LORD'S TEACHING.** "And many of the multitude believed on him, and said, When the Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this Man did?" 1. *The Jews here referred to were those from abroad, as distinguished from the Jews of the city, who were intensely opposed to Christ.* 2. *They showed a progressive faith.* Lately they conceded that he was "a good Man" (ver. 12). Now they admit his Messiahship. 3. *Their faith, genuine as it is, has been largely due to his miraculous power.* The tradition was that the Messiah would possess such a power, and these Jews believe that Christ had exhibited it on a scale commensurate with the Messianic expectations of the nation.

**III. SUDDEN EFFECT OF THIS CHANGE OF OPINION UPON THE POLICY OF THE AUTHORITIES.** "The Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring these things concerning him; and the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to take him." 1. *They resolved to strike a blow at once, so as to save their religious hold upon the people.* They had no scruple about destroying Christ, for they believed him guilty of blasphemy. 2. *The*

*divisions of religious life among the Jews themselves were in abeyance* under the influence of the common danger. The Pharisees acted in harmony with the chief priests, who were Sadducees.

IV. THEIR ACTION SUGGESTS TO OUR LORD THE IDEA OF HIS COMING DEATH. "Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come." 1. *He invites the Jews to profit by the time*, now narrowed to six months, that he would be with them. 2. *The fatal effect of disregarding his timely warning.* (1) He would soon be beyond the reach of their malice, for he would "go to him that sent him." Jesus still emphasizes his death as a return to heaven and to his former glory with the Father. (2) They would hereafter seek him in their impotent distress, but they would not find him. Their future history was to be marked by a constant series of disappointed expectations. 3. *Their strange misapprehension of his words.* (1) They see no trace of a reference to his death or to his return to heaven. (2) They see merely an allusion to some transference of his activities beyond the bounds of Palestine to the Jews of the Dispersion, and through them ultimately to the Gentiles. "Will he go unto the dispersed among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?" (a) This was an involuntary prophecy like that of Caiaphas. (b) The Jews of the Dispersion, scattered in Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria, were the most interesting section of the Jews, the links to connect the old with the new revelation, and in their synagogues the apostles were privileged to make Jesus known as the Messiah. (c) It is a significant fact that this unconscious prophecy should be recorded in the Greek language by a native of Palestine, dwelling at the time in a Gentile city.

Vers. 37—39.—*The address of Jesus.* He makes no reply to Jewish objection.

I. OCCASION OF THIS ADDRESS. "The last and great day of the feast." 1. *It was the eighth day, and was kept as a sabbath.* 2. *It was designed to commemorate the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan.* 3. *It was usual on this day for the people to go, under the guidance of the priest, to the fountain of Siloam*, where a pitcher was filled with water, and brought back with joy to the temple. This usage probably suggested the figure used by our Lord in his address.

II. CHRIST OFFERS THE ONLY SATISFACTION THAT CAN MEET THE SPIRITUAL WANTS OF MAN. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." 1. *The language implies the sense of spiritual need.* (1) There is in man a thirst for righteousness. (2) There is a thirst for peace. (3) There is a thirst for the reconciliation of difficulties. 2. *The language implies that Christ is himself the Rock in the wilderness, out of which the waters of salvation flow.* (1 Cor. x. 4.) (1) This water was emblematic of future blessing in the ancient prophets (Ezek. xlvii. 1, 12). He is the Fountain of gardens, the Well of living waters, "as rivers of water in a dry place" to thirsty souls. There is fulness of grace in Christ; it flows incessantly into the hearts of his people; they can drink of it till their souls are as a watered garden. (2) Mark how the Lord transfers to himself figure after figure of Old Testament times—the rock, the manna, the brazen serpent, the fiery pillar. 3. *It implies that the thirst can only be relieved by the actual drinking of the living water.* Our Lord refers directly to faith.

III. THE BELIEVER HIMSELF IS TRANSFORMED INTO A ROCK. "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." 1. *We have here the refreshing vigour of faith.* 2. *The reception of blessing from Christ leads to its fuller distribution of believers to all within their influence.* "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

IV. THE EXPLANATION OF THE NEW VIGOUR AND INFLUENCE OF THE BELIEVER. "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; b. cause that Jesus was not yet glorified." The reference is to the approaching Pentecost. 1. *The language does not imply that the Spirit had not yet existed in believers*, for Old Testament saints were saved in the same manner as New Testament saints. It is the Spirit's office in all dispensations alike to apply the redemption of Christ to believers. 2. *It implies that the Spirit was to come, not for mere sanctifying work, but as the fountain of gifts to the Church.* This was the peculiarity of the Pentecostal gifts. This was the origin of the "unction" of believers (1 John ii. 20). 3. *The gift of the Spirit was essentially connected with the glorification*



of Christ. "Because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Jesus must first die, rise again, and ascend to heaven before the Holy Ghost would descend upon the Church. This is a first allusion to Christ's glorification.

Vers. 40—44.—*Effect of this address upon the multitude. It made a great impression.*

I. IT DEVELOPED DIFFERENCES OF OPINION. "Many then of the multitude, who had heard this discourse, said, Truly this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ."

1. *A section of the multitude was favourable to Christ's Messianic claims*—(1) one part holding that he was the prophet (Deut. xviii. 18), and therefore, practically, the Messiah, or either Elijah or Jeremiah, who was to be a precursor of the Messiah; (2) another part holding that he was really the Messiah. 2. *A section—perhaps the larger part—held that he could not be the Messiah, because he was born in Galilee.* "Doth the Christ, then, come out of Galilee?" (1) They were ignorant of the true place of his birth; (2) yet they were acquainted with the Scripture that spoke of Bethlehem as the scene of the Messiah's birth. "Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" The whole incident shows (a) that they did not take pains to inquire concerning the real birthplace of Jesus; (b) that divisions of opinion concerning Christ began at a very early period, and still continue. "What think ye of Christ?" is still the question which tests the Christian attitude of men and Churches.

II. THE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION PREVENTED THE IMMEDIATE ARREST OF JESUS.

"And some of them desired to take him; but no man laid hands on him." 1. *The unbelieving Jews would have gladly arrested Jesus, and brought him before the Sanhedrin on a charge of blasphemy.* 2. *Their hands were restrained by Divine Providence, mainly through the risks of a collision with those Jews who were inclined to favour Christ's claims.*

Vers. 45—52.—*The meeting of the Sanhedrin.* The position of the official guides of the people was becoming every hour more gravely compromised by the movement in favour of Jesus.

I. THE EXTRAORDINARY REPORT OF THE OFFICERS TO THE SANHEDRIN. "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this Man."

1. *This report was delivered on the holy sabbath.* The exigency of the moment may have seemed to justify the Sanhedrin in sitting on that day. 2. *The leaders' indignant question marks their disappointment that Jesus is not a prisoner in their hands.* 3. *The officers' answer is singularly frank and decisive.* (1) They use no evasions to excuse themselves, such as that they could not find Jesus, or that they feared the multitude. (2) They proclaim without fear or misgiving the profound impression made upon themselves by our Lord's address. "Never man spake like this Man"—(a) with such authority; (b) with such a grasp of Divine truth; (c) with such practical force and persuasiveness; (d) with such a disregard for the traditional ideas of the Jewish teachers.

II. THE CONTEMPTUOUS REJOINER OF THE PHARISEES. "Are you also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this multitude that knoweth not the Law is cursed." 1. *The evil was growing fast when their very officers, despatched to execute the law, returned with such a tribute to the power of Jesus.* 2. *The Pharisees see in the words of their officers the evidences of nothing but deception.* "Are ye also deceived?" They had already stigmatized Jesus as one who "deceiveth the people." They were all the while ignorant of the deception which shut their own eyes to the truth. (1) They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." (2) They thought they were something when they were nothing. (3) They followed the traditions and commandments of men, which could only lead them into deeper deception. They were deceived, yet they knew it not. 3. *They contrast their own hardy unbelief with the too-ready faith of the multitude.* (1) The Pharisees had not believed in him, except Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathæa, and a few female disciples; but the discipleship in these cases was rather secret. (2) The multitude seemed ready to accept Jesus. (a) The Pharisees regard them as "ignorant of the Law." Whose fault was that? Was it not the fault of the rulers themselves? (b) They regard them as "cursed." The multitude was never so near to blessing.

III. THE EFFORT MADE ON CHRIST'S BEHALF BY ONE OF HIS SECRET DISCIPLES. "Nicodemus saith unto them, Doth our Law then judge a man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" 1. *Nicodemus appears first in history as a secret inquirer.* "He that came to him by night, being one of them." 2. *It is a sign of progress that he makes an effort, however indirect, to turn aside the blow aimed at Jesus.* (1) He might have taken a bolder course and professed his faith openly. (2) Yet his cautious strategy was effective. (3) It does not at the same time exempt him from suspicion of secret sympathy with Galilæan views. "Art thou, then, also of Galilee?" 3. *The delusion of the Sanhedrin respecting the real origin of Jesus.* "Search, and look: for no prophet has arisen from Galilee." (1) Jesus was a Prophet of Judæa, not of Galilee. (2) Mark the contempt expressed for Galilee. It was in their eyes "the refuse of the theocracy." Were they right in saying that no prophets had risen in Galilee? Elijah was of Gilead; Nahum, of Elkosh, a place unknown; and Hosea, of Samaria; and if Jonah is an exception, their passion might have led them to disregard the circumstance in the thought that Judæa was essentially the home of the prophets. 4. *The danger to Jesus was averted.* "And every man went to his own house." The Sanhedrin broke up without making any fresh effort to check the progress of Jesus.

#### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Ver. 5.—*Brethren, but not believers.* In recording this fact the evangelist shows his usual candour. The fact that some of those who were nearest akin to Jesus withheld from him their faith is at first sight surprising. It must have been very distressing to the human heart of our Lord to meet with such unbelief; and it must have been painful, and to some extent discouraging, to his avowed and ardent disciples. Yet the fact is so suggestive and instructive that, upon reflection, we cannot wonder that it was thus put upon record.

I. IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE FAMILIAR WITH CHRIST, HIS DOCTRINE, AND GOSPEL, AND YET NOT TO BELIEVE ON HIM. In reading the gospel narrative, we meet with instances of unbelief which do not surprise us, which seem easily accounted for. There were many who did not really know Christ, who simply took other people's judgment concerning him, or acted upon the prejudices natural to ignorance. We scarcely wonder that the selfish, unscrupulous, unspiritual rulers and scribes at Jerusalem rejected Christ's claims, and acted towards him with hostility; or that the Roman procurator Pilate misunderstood him, and finally abandoned him to his foes. But we are shocked when we learn that the very brethren of Jesus wanted faith—at all events, thorough faith—in Jesus. They were his kin; they had known him for many years; they must have enjoyed many opportunities of studying his character and verifying his claims. Yet they withheld their faith, at least for a time. This fact is not unparalleled. In condemning the brethren of Jesus, the hearer of the gospel may possibly be condemning himself. In our own day, in the very heart of Christian society, there may be found many who are very familiar with the gospel, who are frequent readers and hearers of the Word, who have seen in their nearest friends very favourable representatives of the Christian character, who yet have little interest, and no faith, in Christ himself.

II. EXPLANATIONS OF THIS REJECTION OF CHRIST, CONSISTENT WITH FAMILIARITY WITH HIM, MAY BE DISCOVERED IN HUMAN NATURE AND EXPERIENCE. 1. There are cases in which familiarity itself seems adverse to faith. A striking illustration of the action of this principle is recorded by St. Luke. The Nazarenes knew Jesus well; he had been brought up among them, had dwelt in their town; everything they had known of him must have been favourable. "Familiarity," says the proverb, "breeds contempt;" and in vulgar natures this is true. Accordingly, the people of Nazareth, when the Divine Prophet visited them, were not only incredulous, they were hostile. In his own city he had no honour. It seems to have been the same with our Lord's kindred; it was hard for them to believe that one brought up among them, and in circumstances resembling their own, could be so far above them, in true rank and in spiritual authority, as Jesus claimed to be. To how many has the name of Jesus been familiar from childhood, without awakening sentiments of reverence and faith! When

some such persons have the dignity and the power and preciousness of Jesus brought in some way with unusual vividness before their minds, it may be noticed that resentment is aroused rather than faith. Christ has occupied a familiar place in their stock of knowledge; but perhaps on that very account they are indisposed to see in him what they have never seen before. 2. There are cases in which worldliness and sluggishness of spirit are a barrier to faith in Christ. Such persons may be, through birth and association, almost as brethren to the Lord; yet their habits of mind prevent them from rousing themselves even to consider his claims. They live at a low level, and they hate everything that would raise them to a higher. They resist any demand upon admiration or faith. They may be indisposed to believe in anyone or in anything; how much more in a Being so glorious, in doctrines so inspiring, as Christianity presents! 3. There are cases in which example explains indifference to the Saviour. No doubt our Lord's kinsmen ought to have been influenced by the better example of the mother and the disciples of Jesus. But they appear to have been more affected by the negligence and unbelief of others. It is observable that they came to believe at a later period—perhaps under the influence of the growing numbers of the Lord's adherents. Certain it is, that many of the hearers of the gospel have no better reason to give for their incredulity than the faithlessness of others, especially of those with whom they most associate, and from whom they unconsciously take their moral tone. A "reason" this is not, but it is a sufficient explanation to those acquainted with human nature.

III. VALUABLE PRACTICAL LESSONS MAY BE LEARNED FROM THE UNBELIEF OF CHRIST'S BRETHREN. Those especially who have long enjoyed many religious advantages may gain profit from this record, which contains suggestions of very serious admonition. 1. It is foolish and wrong to rest in outward privileges; for these of themselves, if not used aright, are of no avail. If it served no valuable end for these relatives of Jesus to be so near him in blood, we shall act foolishly if we rest in our association with Christ's Church. 2. It is important to penetrate through superficial acquaintance with Christ to real spiritual knowledge of him. It is well to have an acquaintance with the facts and doctrines of Christianity. But these are merely means to a higher end, to faith and fellowship, assimilation and devotion. 3. Not to believe in Christ is to reject him in all his glorious offices. He came to earth to be a Prophet, a Priest, and a King. To refuse our faith to him in these several offices, is to forfeit the spiritual, the priceless blessings which it is his heart's desire to confer upon the children of men.—T.

Ver. 7.—*Christ's witness against sin.* The "world," which is here affirmed by Jesus to have hated him, is not to be distinguished from the "Church," if that expression may be applied to those who professed to receive the revelation and to do the will of God. For amongst our Lord's enemies, the foremost were certainly the men who were at the head of the theocracy, and whose sins Jesus most severely censured. From this significant fact, people professedly religious, and even people who sincerely believe themselves to be religious, may take warning, and may learn not to trust in their outward religiousness, as if that in itself sufficed to secure them against identification with the sinful world.

I. THE WAYS IN WHICH THE LORD JESUS WITNESSED AGAINST THE WORLD'S EVIL. 1. *By his language.* Meek and gracious as he was towards such sinners as were penitent, Jesus was unsparing in his denunciations of hardened and hypocritical offenders against the Law of God. Against falsehood, covetousness, cruelty, and licentiousness, the Son of man raised his voice in indignant protest and censure. And against such sins, when cloaked by a religious profession, he was severe with a severity unexampled even in Scripture. 2. *By his conduct.* In many cases there is no protest against evil so effective as an upright and holy life. This protest was ever offered by our Lord; it was natural and habitual to him. The calm dignity with which our Lord lived amidst formalists and dissemblers could not be unnoticed either by friends or foes, and by his foes it was felt as a rebuke and a condemnation.

II. THE HATRED WHICH OUR LORD'S WITNESS AGAINST THE WORLD'S EVIL AROUSED AGAINST HIM. 1. This hatred evinced a moral warfare within human nature. On the one hand, the conscience of sinners concurred in the rebukes uttered by the holy

Saviour; on the other hand, their selfishness and pride would not submit to these rebukes. Thus there arose, as in such circumstances there ever arises, an inner conflict. And in order to repress the voice of conscience, sinners often hardened themselves against its expostulations by giving themselves more resolutely over into the power of evil. 2. This hatred led to calumny and slander against the holy Christ. Only thus can we account for the absurd and wicked and scandalous language used concerning Jesus. His enemies called him a sinner, a deceiver, and declared that he was possessed by a demon, by Beelzebub. If he had left their sins unrebuked, and had humoured their prejudices, he might have secured the adherence and support of the Jewish leaders; but the upright course he took in dealing with them brought down upon him their malice and their hatred. 3. This hatred was the motive of the plot which issued in the apprehension and death of Jesus. It appears that the hostility of the priests and rulers against Jesus of Nazareth was excited by his pure and spiritual teaching, which was felt to be a rebuke to their formality and hypocrisy, and by his denunciations of their ambition and covetousness. His enemies felt that there was a likelihood of his undermining their influence over the common people. This led to the resolution to compass his death by means however foul.

III. THE WORLD'S HATRED BECAME THUS THE OCCASION OF THE EVENT WHICH BROUGHT THE WORLD'S DELIVERANCE FROM ITS SIN. The wisdom of God is often manifested in the bringing of good out of evil. The most stupendous and glorious instance of this wisdom was afforded in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. He testified against the world's evil; the hatred of the world was thus inflamed against him; this hatred led to the apprehension, the condemnation, and the death of the Holy One and Just; and his death was God's method of vanquishing the world's sin, and of saving mankind from spiritual destruction and ruin.—T.

Ver. 17.—*A good will the condition of spiritual discernment.* Intellectual men are apt to set too high a value upon the exercise of the intellect. And in this error they are often confirmed by the notions of the ignorant and uninstructed, who look up with wonder to the learned and the mentally acute, and are willing to think such prodigies of knowledge must be assured possessors of all good things. But the fact is, that the highest of all possessions is to be attained, not by the scholarship or the ability which men often over-estimate, but by the trusting heart and the obedient and submissive will. Nowhere is this great spiritual lesson more plainly and effectively inculcated than in this passage.

I. THE SOURCE OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINE. This was a mystery to many of the Jews, who knew that Jesus was born in a lowly station, and that he had not been trained in the schools of rabbinical learning, and who could not understand how he could teach with such justice, profundity, and beauty. With this difficulty Jesus here deals. 1. The doctrine of Jesus is asserted by himself to be *derived*. He repudiated the notion that he spake from himself, *i.e.* from the experience or originality of a merely human mind. 2. The doctrine of Jesus is asserted by himself to be Divine. It was neither his own, nor that of a school of learning, nor was it a mere amplification of the sayings of the ancient legislator and the ancient prophets. Jesus ever claimed to have come from God, and to have acted and spoken with the authority of God. This, however, was his assertion; how were his hearers to verify it?

II. THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINE. There were many who listened to the discourses and conversations of the great Teacher, who were familiar with his language, but who were unacquainted with, and indifferent to, the spiritual meaning and power of which that language was, to sympathetic souls, the vehicle. How can this meaning and power be known? 1. There must be a will in harmony with God's will. Man is not merely an intellectual being; he is emotional and practical. And the will is the man. It is the habitual purposes which determine the man's character. Many persons have insight into truth, and even admiration of truth, whose moral life is nevertheless evil, because they abandon themselves to be the sport of every fleeting passion. The habitual indulgence of passion, pride, and worldliness blinds the spiritual vision, so that the highest good becomes indiscernible. And thus those who are not without natural gifts of intelligence become incapable of judging the highest type of character or of doctrine. On the other hand, the cultivation of a will in harmony with the Divine will is the means of

purifying the spiritual vision. When the good is habitually chosen, the true comes to be habitually sought and prized. 2. The will thus in harmony with God's will recognizes the Divine origin of Christ's teaching. Both by reason of his acquaintance with the mind of God, and by his sympathy with the Law and the truth of God, the devout and obedient man is fitted to pronounce upon the origin of the Lord's teaching. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things;" he has "the mind of Christ." Thus it is, as our Lord acknowledged with gratitude, that things hidden from the wise and prudent are often revealed unto babes. His own apostles were a living illustration of this law. And every age furnishes examples of clever men, and even learned men, who have misunderstood and misrepresented Christ's teaching, because they have not been in sympathy with the righteous and holy will of the Eternal; whilst every age furnishes also examples of simple and unlettered men who, because lovers of goodness, have displayed a special discernment of mind in apprehending, and even in teaching, Christian doctrine. In this, as in other respects, it is the childlike nature that enters the kingdom of heaven.—T.

**Ver. 37.—*The thirsting invited to the Fountain of living waters.*** It was our Lord's wont to make use of the most familiar objects, the most ordinary events, the most customary practices, in order to illustrate and to enforce spiritual truth. To set forth man's need of teaching, of heavenly grace, of salvation, Christ spoke of hunger and of thirst, of bread and of water. On the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, there was performed a ceremony which may have immediately suggested the language of the text. This was the drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam, which was borne in procession to the temple, and poured out as a sacred libation before the Lord. It was probably upon the suggestion of this ceremony that our Lord uttered the memorable and encouraging words of the text.

**I. THE THIRST OF THE HUMAN SOUL.** This thirst is deep-seated in the nature of man. It manifests itself in the many forms of restless activity by which men seek to satisfy their aspirations. The powerlessness of the world to quench this thirst is an indication of the Divine origin of the soul. He who drinks at a cistern will find that the cistern will run dry. He who quaffs the water of a pool may find the water foul and turbid. He who tries to quench his thirst by draughts from the sea will learn that, so far from assuaging, these salt waters only increase the thirst.

"The frail vessel thou hast made,  
No hands but thine can fill;  
For the waters of this world have failed,  
And I am thirsty still."

**II. THE SATISFYING GIFTS OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT.** That which the world cannot do, the Spirit of God can do; he can fill the created nature with peace, purity, truth, and power. The river of God's love flows on for ever; it is inexhaustible. "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." "Blessed are they that . . . thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

**III. THE INVITATION AND PROMISE OF JESUS.** 1. He claims himself to dispense the satisfying gifts of the Spirit. He is the Rock in the wilderness, from which flows the stream of living water. Thus he said, "Let him come unto me;" and at an earlier period of his ministry, "I would have given thee living water." 2. The terms upon which this blessing is conferred are such as are most encouraging to the hearer of the gospel. *Faith* is required from the thirsting applicant. This is evidently intended by the use of the words "come" and "drink." The blessing must be appropriated. And yet the satisfying provision is offered *freely*; it is not bought, but given. "Drink of the water of life freely."—T.

**Ver. 40.—*The prophet.*** In the Jewish dispensation no unimportant place was filled by the order of men known as seers or prophets. From Samuel to Malachi, they were the spiritual teachers and guides of Israel. The Lord Christ gathered up in his own Person and ministry the significance and power of the prophetic office.

**I. CHRIST'S PROPHETIC DESIGNATION.** He was known as a Prophet by those who saw in him more than a rabbi, while yet they knew him not as the Messiah. It had been

foretold by Moses in the Pentateuch, and by the last of the prophets who contributed to the Old Testament canon, that a great Prophet should in after-days be raised up by the Eternal. And this was fulfilled in the Prophet of Nazareth.

**II. CHRIST'S PROPHETIC QUALIFICATIONS.** His Divine nature, his intimacy with his Father, in whose bosom, *i.e.* in whose counsels and secrets, he was, constituted his supreme fitness for this office. And his humanity, his oneness with the race whose nature he assumed, enabled him to communicate prophetic messages with inimitable effectiveness. A prophet is one who speaks for God; this Jesus did, as none else could or can.

**III. CHRIST'S PROPHETIC ACTS.** His miracles were such, for they taught, with a power even words could not rival, great spiritual and eternal truths. His conduct in cleansing the temple with authority and holy indignation was an example of action becoming in a Prophet commissioned by God himself.

**IV. CHRIST'S PROPHETIC WORDS.** To enumerate these would be to repeat a large portion of the Gospel records. He explained the Law; he preached the gospel; he foretold things to come; he spake as One having authority; yet he spake as One having winning attractiveness in all his words.

**V. CHRIST'S PROPHETIC PERPETUITY.** His word was reiterated by the inspired apostles, to whose memory all his sayings were brought. It is continued in the New Testament, the Word of prophecy. As the Prophet of this spiritual dispensation, Jesus inspires his Church, convinces human minds, changes human hearts, hallows human society. As long as man needs teaching, Christ is, and will remain, the one great Divine and authoritative Prophet of humanity.—T.

**Ver. 41.—The Christ.** In order that the language recorded in this passage to have been used by the Jews may be properly understood, it must be borne in mind that "the Christ" was not a proper name, but an official designation. It is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew "Messiah," and signifies literally, "the Anointed One." The Christ is, then, One divinely selected, consecrated, and authorized.

**I. IT WAS KNOWN BY THE JEWS THAT THE COMING OF THE CHRIST WAS FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.** Although the name "Messiah" occurs once only, and that in the Book of Daniel, the observant reader of the Psalms and of the Prophets is well aware that the advent is foretold of a remarkable Being, who should in due time appear to fulfil the benevolent purposes of God towards men. Upon examination it is found that this person was predicted as Divine and yet human, as of royal lineage and authority, as the Bringer of blessings to Israel and to mankind, as a Sufferer and yet as a Conqueror, as One passing through death to victory and to dominion.

**II. THE COMING OF THE CHRIST WAS EXPECTED BY THE JEWS AND BY THEIR NEIGHBOURS.** 1. This appears from the insight which the Gospels give us into the minds of certain persons who lived at the time of our Lord's ministry and advent. Thus, Simeon was led to expect that he should see the Lord's Christ; men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether he were the Christ; the Samaritan woman remarked to Jesus himself, "We know that Messiah cometh." 2. The same appears also from certain tests which the Jews proposed to apply to Jesus of Nazareth, in order to verify or discredit the claim to Messiahship advanced on his behalf. They looked that the Christ should be a descendant of David; that he should be born at Bethlehem; that he should be a Worker of miracles; that he should be the Restorer of the kingdom to Israel, over whom he should rule; that he should abide for ever. So far as there was correspondence between the facts of Jesus' ministry and these circumstances, so far there was a disposition on the part of some to acknowledge his Messiahship.

**III. THERE WERE OBVIOUS AND POWERFUL HINDRANCES TO THE SPREAD OF THE BELIEF THAT JESUS WAS THE CHRIST.** 1. The life of the Prophet of Nazareth in some respects contradicted popular expectations. He was lowly in station; poor and unfriended by the great; he put forward no assumptions of worldly power; he went about doing good. All this was very different from what the Jews expected in the Messiah. 2. Jesus himself discouraged his disciples and friends from noising abroad the tidings of his Messiahship. 3. The authorities of the synagogue, towards the close of our Lord's ministry, threatened with excommunication any who should confess him

to be the Christ. This step could not but be adverse to a general recognition of his rightful claims.

IV. THAT JESUS WAS THE CHRIST WAS, HOWEVER, CORDIALLY BELIEVED BY HIS DISCIPLES. Collecting together the somewhat scattered evidence of this fact, the student of the Gospels cannot but be impressed by its abundance and conclusiveness. Andrew, in the very hour of his call to discipleship, acknowledged Jesus as Christ; Peter, at a later period, uttered a memorable confession to the same effect; the Samaritan woman and her neighbours came to the same conclusion; Martha of Bethany gave explicit testimony to her belief of this great fact; some of the Jews, as recorded in the text, did not hesitate to express their belief that Jesus was the Christ. It may be added that the very demons over whom he exercised authority are said to have known that he was the Divine Messiah.

V. JESUS' CLAIM TO BE THE CHRIST WAS ONE CHIEF GROUND OF THE HOSTILITY OF THE JEWISH RULERS, AND WAS THE OCCASION OF HIS CONDEMNATION TO DEATH. At our Lord's trial before the high priest, one of the charges against him was that he affirmed himself to be the Christ; and it was upon this, and upon the further charge that he claimed to be the Son of God, that he was deemed by his enemies worthy of death. A rabbi, a prophet, he might have professed himself to be without giving offence. But for a lowly peasant teacher to claim Messiahship was to seal his own doom!

VI. AS CHRIST, JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD; AND AS CHRIST, HE WAS PREACHED TO THE WORLD. In the discourses which are recorded in the Book of the Acts, as having been delivered after the Ascension, Jesus is set forth as the Christ of God, evidently proved to be such by his resurrection. And the Gospels, as John expressly tells us, were written that their readers might know that Jesus is the Christ. Here, indeed, are the glad tidings to be proclaimed to all men; for it is because Jesus is the Christ of God that he is the Saviour of the world.—T.

Ver. 46.—*The incomparable words.* The testimony of these officers was at least impartial. If they were prejudiced, it was not in favour of Jesus, but against him. Persons in their position were likely to share the feelings of those by whom they were employed, and by whom they were sent on a message hostile to the Prophet of Nazareth. But the demeanour, and especially the language, of Jesus disarmed them. They came under the spell of his wisdom, his grace, his eloquence. And when they returned, without having executed their commission, they justified themselves by the exclamation, "Never man spake like this Man."

I. CHRIST'S WORDS ARE INCOMPARABLE AS REVELATIONS OF TRUTH. He uttered the justest, the sublimest truths regarding the character and attributes of God; concerning the nature, the state, the sin, the peril of man; concerning religion, or the relation between man and God, especially concerning the Divine provision of salvation, and of spiritual and immortal life.

II. CHRIST'S WORDS ARE INCOMPARABLE AS ANNOUNCING LAWS OF HUMAN LIFE. Where else can we find perfect precepts to govern conduct, dictates of morality so spiritual, motives to obedience so mighty? Christ's are the authoritative words of a Divine Lawgiver, who claims to rule the hearts, and, through the hearts, the actions and habits of mankind.

III. CHRIST'S WORDS ARE INCOMPARABLE IN THEIR STYLE AND THEIR ILLUSTRATIONS, ADAPTING THEM TO READERS OF EVERY CLASS. They are simple words, however profound may be the truth they embody; they are beautiful words, which charm a pure and lively imagination; they are earnest words, which rouse emotion and inspire a reverent attention. This is evident both from the place they have taken in literature, and from the fact that they are equally appreciated by the young and the old, by the cultured and the untaught.

IV. CHRIST'S WORDS ARE INCOMPARABLE IN EFFICIENCY. This is the true test, and this test brings out the unequalled power of the words, which are mighty because they are the expression of the Divine mind. Many of our Lord's sayings might be quoted, which have, as a matter of fact, revolutionized the thoughts and doctrines of millions of men. Some of the greatest reforms in human society may be traced up with certainty to words uttered by the Nazarene.

V. CHRIST'S WORDS ARE INCOMPARABLE FOR THEIR ENDURING, PERMANENT LIFE AND INFLUENCE. The words of many wise, thoughtful, and good men have perished. There are words which are full of meaning and preciousness for one generation, but which fail to affect the generations which follow. But Christ's words are treasured with increasing reverence and attachment by succeeding generations. His own saying is verified by the lapse of time: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."—T.

Ver. 48.—*Class prejudice and Christianity.* The learned and the rich sometimes hate and despise a form of religion because it is favoured by the poor and the ignorant; and these in turn dislike and reject a different form of religion because it is adopted by their social superiors. Something similar to this antipathy seems to have been manifested among the Jews in the time of our Lord; only it was not a form of religion that was in question, it was religion itself, or rather that Being who is in his own person the sum and substance of true religion. There were undoubtedly serious reasons which led rulers and Pharisees to reject Jesus of Nazareth. That mentioned in this passage was not the most serious; but it was a real and influential reason. Jesus was reputed a Galilæan; he was heard gladly by the common people, who were ignorant of the Law. This was reason enough for his rejection by those who respected only the educated and ruling classes of society.

I. THE ASSERTION IMPLIED, viz. that Jesus was not received with faith by the rulers and the Pharisees. This was not universally true. The attitude of Nicodemus on this occasion shows that, even in the council of the nation, faith in Jesus as the Christ was not unknown. Joseph of Arimathea also was a disciple of Jesus, though secretly. Yet, broadly speaking, it was undoubtedly the case that the upper classes of his countrymen rejected Jesus, and that the more influential among them hated and dreaded him. This may be accounted for, partly upon the general principle that the wealthy and educated tend to conservatism; but mainly by considering how the teaching of Jesus was undermining the authority of the Jewish leaders, and was even threatening to cut off some of the sources of their ill-gotten riches.

II. THE ARGUMENT SUGGESTED. The language suggested some such argument as this—What the learned and leading classes reject is likely to be incredible and unworthy of acceptance; now, these classes altogether repudiate Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, or even as a prophet; there is, therefore, no room for accepting or even considering his claims. The fact of the hostility of the rulers was by this time matter of notoriety, and this had, no doubt, influence with many who were accustomed to look to their social and ecclesiastical superiors for leading. The same principle which was so influential in our Lord's day has in subsequent periods of human history induced many to reject the Saviour. Some have attached importance to the infidelity of princes, others to that of leaders in fashion, others to that of great philosophers; and have permitted their blind reverence for authority to turn their attention away from the weighty credentials of Christianity, and from the claims of Christ himself.

III. THE FALLACY LATENT. This is to be found in the assumption that learned and powerful men are likely to be right upon questions of religion. The events which followed in the history of the Son of man were enough to dispel this illusion. Not for the first or the last time, the judges in whom public confidence is chiefly placed were wrong, and the poor, illiterate, and despised were right. Against a fallacy which has led so many astray, it is well that those who desire above all things to attain the truth should be upon their guard. And the true protection is this: the habit, not of asking—What is the judgment of men? but of asking—What are the indications of the will of God? If the Lord Jesus Christ be in himself adapted to our needs as being the Prophet, the Priest, and the King of humanity, it is of little consequence, so far as practical guidance is concerned, to consider who rejects his claims. Let every one who is a seeker of truth turn his heart and mind to Christ. He is his own best witness, his own most convincing evidence.—T.

Ver. 6.—*Jesus in relation to time.* Notice—

I. THE TIME OF JESUS. "My time is not yet come." His time to go up to the feast, or his time to manifest himself. We have here: 1. *Jesus as the Subject of time.*



During his earthly career he was the Subject of time, and dependent upon it. He who was before and really above time was now its Subject. As such : (1) He had regard to its *events*; what were taking place in the social and religious world around him, their bearings upon each other, and especially upon his movements and actions, and the bearings of his movements upon the events of the time. (2) He had regard to the *character of his time*; to the men who acted in it—men of religious and social authority and power—to their principles and attitude towards him and the great mission of his life. (3) He *shaped his course accordingly*. He had a certain amount of time to live and do his work. He could escape death if he wished; but could not have escaped death and perform the mission of his life. He might have shortened his days, and frustrated their end by indiscreetly rushing into the teeth of danger; but as a Subject of time he had due regard to current events and public feelings in relation to him, so that he acted with perfect wisdom and discretion. 2. *Jesus as the Manager of time.* (1) To him *time was very precious*. His time was very short, and he had an immense work to do. Never was so little time given for such a great work. Every moment was an age, and ages were compressed into a moment. He made the best of time. Every moment was infinitely precious. (2) He had a *special time for every work*. He never performed a single miracle nor preached a single discourse at random. There was perfect adaptation and correspondence between his actions and the time. They fitted in with the natural sequence of events, and with the state of thoughts and feelings. They could not be performed at any other time with the same results. They were like the growth of spring and the ripe fulness of harvest. (3) He had *some special work for every portion of time*, so that every hour was well occupied and every minute well spent. He had a season for everything, and everything was in its season. (4) The *exact time for all his movements was well known to him*. He knew when it had not and when it had come, so that he was never too soon nor too late. He could not be induced to move by the solicitations of friends before his time; neither could he be stopped, nor be driven from the scene of duty, when his time had arrived. Punctuality was one of his characteristics. He was at every station and every duty in due time, and not before. He was never waiting, and no one had to wait for him. He was bound to time, and time was bound to him. He was both its Subject and its King.

II. THE TIME OF HIS BRETHREN. Their time and his differed materially. 1. *Their time was always ready*. This was true with regard to going up to the feast, and also to the manifestation of Christ according to their ideas. They were ever ready and anxious for this. But Christ's time was not yet come. Man's time is often before that of God. His ideas are more limited. God's thoughts and plans move in an infinite circle, and take a longer time to be accomplished. Man's time is often after that of God. Now is God's accepted time to repent and believe. It is at some more convenient season often with man. 2. *Their time was by self; his by the general good*. Their notions were carnal and selfish, and were inspired in all their movements by principles of self-interest; but Christ's notions were spiritual and Divine, and he was ever inspired in all his movements by Divine and benevolent principles—the glory of God and the spiritual redemption of the human family. There is a vast difference between the time of selfishness and that of self-sacrificing love. 3. *Their time was by the present; his was by the future as well*. They were prompted by present advantage, by considerations which only embraced the limited period of their own life; but Jesus was prompted by future advantages, and by considerations which embraced endless futurity. Every step he gave was given with regard to all future ages. His time was regulated by eternity, and the eternity of myriads depended on his time. 4. *Their time was by earth; his was by heaven*. Theirs was by the material sun; his was by the eternal throne. Their principles were in perfect accord with those of the world, and their notions of the Messiah were those of the nation at large. So that they could move with perfect safety whenever they liked, they were in no danger. But the principles of Jesus were in perfect accord with those of God—they were holiness, spirituality, benevolence, self-sacrifice, and mercy, and thus in direct antagonism to the world; so that an unwise move might result in an untimely and fatal collision. 5. *Their time was by unbelief; his was by faith*. We are told that his brothers did not really believe on him. And unbelief is ever impatient, commanding, and always ready for some carnal demonstration and material sign. Faith is patient, submissive, and ever grateful for a vision when it

comes; but if it comes not at the time and in the way expected it waits and trusts and obeys. Jesus was the Messiah and the Saviour of faith. He revealed himself to faith, and faith is the only power on earth which could see, comprehend, and appreciate his real character and his Divine mission; consequently all his movements, although not regardless of unbelief as precautionary, yet were directly made in the interest of faith. When faith is ready, he will be at the feast, and will manifest himself at any risk.

LESSONS. 1. *We are in as much danger often from mistaken friends as from open foes.* Jesus was so now from his brethren and the multitude; they wished to make him King. 2. *A word or a deed in season is much more effective than otherwise.* Christ's words and deeds were ever seasonable. God has his set time for punishment and salvation. 3. *In order that our time should correspond with that of Jesus, let us believe on him.* If we wish to have his company to the feast, let us exercise implicit trust in him. 4. *If we wish to make the most of time, let us follow Jesus in watching the best season for everything.* Random shots seldom kill anything. We should not merely be diligent, but take aim.—B. T.

Ver. 11.—“*Where is he?*” This question may indicate different thoughts and sentiments with regard to Jesus as asked by different persons. It may be looked upon—

I. AS THE QUESTION OF GENERAL INTEREST. There is no doubt that Jesus was the most interesting person of that age. His mighty works and his wonderful teaching had excited the interest of the general public, and had stirred society to its utmost depth. How many persons there were concerning whom no question was asked! They might come and go almost unnoticed. But not so Jesus. The general question with regard to him was, “Where is he?” His movements were keenly watched, and his presence or absence was keenly noticed.

II. AS THE QUESTION OF WONDER. Although he was not at the last Passover, still he was in the habit of attending the national feasts at Jerusalem; and this being one of the chief, and probably rumours had reached the city of his intention to be present and being now late, wonder would naturally express itself by the question, “Where is he?”

III. AS THE QUESTION OF CURIOSITY. There was a large class to whom Jesus was only a curiosity. In them he excited no other sentiment. They stood in the rear, watching with avidity the actions of those in front. They had neither love nor hatred, but still were busy and interested in the strange phenomenon of his life, and perhaps no sentiment with regard to him would ask the question more often and flippantly, “Where is he?”

IV. AS THE QUESTION OF DOUBT. Doubt with regard to Jesus at this time was very prevalent. The multitude who represented the national idea of the Messiah were doubtful of him. Many of them had recently left him, and had apparently given up the hope of his consenting to be crowned the temporal King of the Jews. Still many of them even were doubtful as to this, and the disciples were not quite free from doubt on this matter. They still clung to the hope, but his absence from the feast, from such a public gathering and an advantageous occasion, would make the most sanguine doubtful, and they would impatiently ask, “Where is he?”

V. AS THE QUESTION OF HATRED. No feeling could be more present in the question than this, especially when we consider that it was asked by the Jews; for the dominant party were bitter, confirmed, and almost unanimous in their hatred to him and his ministry. And in the question as coming from them there was scarcely a spark of any other feeling but confirmed and seething hatred. They were in a region far below that of curiosity and doubt; they were in that of hatred and bloodshed.

VI. AS THE QUESTION OF SINCERE AFFECTION. Those who entertained this feeling were in a small minority, still it is not too much to think that in that vast and generally antagonistic crowd there was many a one who would re-echo the question even from the lips of malice and hatred, and send it forth filled with gratitude and love. “Where is he?”—he who healed my son or my daughter, he who is kind and so full of grace and truth? We know of one, at least, among the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin who would ask it as a question of love—Nicodemus. Genuine love and faith were not quite unrepresented in the inquiries concerning Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.

**CONCLUSIONS.** 1. *The wonderful power of language as the instrument of thought and sentiments.* The same words may convey different feelings. Murder and love may travel in the same vehicle. "Where is he?" 2. *People in all ages make inquiries concerning Jesus Christ from different motives and with different intentions.* Their language may be almost the same—"Where is he?" but the motives and intentions are different and various. 3. *It is of paramount importance with what motives and intentions we inquire for Christ.* No motive nor intention is worthy of him but faith and the salvation of the soul. 4. *Blessed are those who ask with living faith, "Where is he?"* He will soon appear and satisfy all their wants.—B. T.

**VERS. 40—44.—An important division.** We have here: 1. *A great feast.* That of Tabernacles. 2. *A great day.* The last day of the feast. 3. *A great preacher.* The Christ, the Son of God. 4. *A great sermon.* "He cried;" and he had something worth crying—the living water for a thirsty world. 5. *A great division.* "And there was a division among the people," etc. Notice—

I. **SOME OF THE FEATURES OF THIS DIVISION.** 1. *Jesus was the Subject of this division.* "Because of him." The question was—Who was he? what was he? A good or a bad man, a true prophet or an impostor? 2. *They were divided in their opinions.* Some thought he was the Prophet; some thought he was the Christ; while others doubted, objected, and opposed. 3. *They were divided while it was important that they should agree.* If he was an impostor, it was important that they should agree to expose him and stem his influence; but if their Messiah, it was all-important that they should agree to accept and obey him. 4. *They were divided while they ought to be unanimous.* Jesus had told them who he was, and his person, character, ministry, and his mighty works, all were in perfect harmony with his claims. With perfect unity and Divine force they pointed to him as the Son of God. 5. *In this division error dissents from truth.* Some said, "He is the Christ." Error doubted and objected. Truth is older and firmer than error, right than wrong. Error and wrong are negatives of truth and right. 6. *Amidst this division Christ remained the same, and shone on.* The different opinions of men make no change in Jesus himself. Christ changes men's opinions, but their opinions produce no change in him.

II. **THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF THIS DIVISION AND ITS CONSEQUENT VARIETY OF OPINIONS.** 1. *Some were prejudiced against him.* (1) Prejudice is unreasonable (ver. 41). It makes more of a place often than a person. The highest claims of a person are ignored through unreasonable objections to the place whence he hails. (2) Prejudice makes what is really for the truth to appear against it. (Ver. 42.) Christ was of the lineage of David, and a native of Bethlehem. They manifest here a culpable ignorance or a wilful suppression of knowledge. Prejudice is capable of both. 2. *Some were filled with hatred against him.* (Ver. 44.) Through this passion even the Son of God appeared as an impostor and a demon. A Being of infinite love could not be accepted nor even recognized through hatred. 3. *Some were well disposed to him.* (Ver. 40.) A favourable disposition will generally find the truth or an approximation to it. "The Prophet;" "the Christ." This was probably the verdict of the majority of that age. Their heads were right, their hearts were wrong. 4. *All seemed sadly indifferent.* The most earnest were his haters. Even those who rightly pronounced him to be the Christ seemed to lack earnestness of soul. The great "cry" of Jesus on the last day of the feast did not find an adequate response from the heart of the multitudes. There was a division, a stir, and that was apparently all.

**CONCLUSIONS.** 1. *Christ has occasioned great divisions in the world.* This was not the first nor the last. A variety of opinions, of sentiments and feelings, with regard to him. He is the occasion, not the cause. He is the Prince of peace and unity, and yet divisions with regard to him have stirred humanity into the highest pitch of passion, and have resulted in wars, persecutions, and martyrdoms. 2. *The most important division of humanity is that on Christ.* Nations divide on important questions, but upon none so important as this. Upon this hangs the eternal destiny of the world. 3. *In this division all are divided into two parties, for or against him.* There is no neutrality. 4. *Through divisions, after all, right views of Jesus are obtained.* We must obtain peace through wars, calm through storms, and unanimity through divisions. Out of these stirring divisions Christ will come forth as the Son of God and the Saviour

of man. 5. *In all these divisions it is all-important to possess an earnest spirit and a well-disposed heart, for through these alone can we see Jesus as he is.* 6. *In these divisions we may give Jesus a good name and nothing more.* We may call him the Christ, but "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord," etc. He demands the verdict of the heart. 7. *In this division where do we stand—for or against him?*—B. T.

Vers. 45, 46.—*Captivity led captive.* Notice—

I. THE COUNCIL'S QUESTION. "Why did ye not bring him?" There are several feelings and sentiments implied in this question. 1. *Great hatred.* They hated Jesus to such an extent that they wished to put him to death. For this purpose they sent the officers to take him, and the hatred which inspired this contemplated deed was implied in this question. Human hatred cannot go further than this. Murder is the last cowardly argument of bigotry and weakness. They had no reason. Hatred does not require a valid reason; it will coin one for itself. It was seething in the question, "Why," etc.? 2. *Great surprise.* They would not be more surprised to see Jesus there without the officers than to see the officers without Jesus. They were not some men sent at random, but picked officers, furnished with authority and strictly commanded to bring him. But they are returned without their Victim—and why? They are lost in surprise. 3. *Great disappointment.* They had calculated upon a feast more enjoyable to them than that of Tabernacles. They had stayed away from the latter in anticipation of a greater luxury—to have the Victim of their hatred in their power. But, behold the officers without him! It is thought that the best opportunity is lost. By the next time the attempt is made to take him, he will perhaps have so grown in power and popularity that it will be in vain. A good opportunity is lost; the feast of hatred and malice is missed. "Why," etc.? The question trembles with disappointment. Hatred is terribly disappointed when it cannot obtain what it wishes. 4. *A great insult.* In this question we can hear the quivering notes of insulted pride. "Why," etc.? There is a suspicion that their authority was disobeyed and their command set at naught, and that by their inferiors, their dependents, their menials; and they demand the reason. 5. *A severe reproof.* We can well imagine their voices thunders, their words lightnings, and their visage as the angry sky just before a storm, as they asked the question, "Why did ye," etc.? If their power and authority were equal to their hatred and pride, these officials would soon have to feel the terrible weight of their revenge.

II. THE OFFICERS' REPLY. "Never man," etc. 1. *This is a remarkable testimony of unbiased witnesses to Jesus.* If they had any prejudice at all, it would certainly be against him. It is almost the general rule that servants are inspired with the spirit and sentiments of their masters. If so, we can well imagine how these officers felt and spoke as they went forth to take Jesus. But they returned in a different spirit and with a different tale. "Never man," etc. No one can suspect them of undue partiality to Jesus, but rather the contrary; therefore their testimony is remarkable and of special value. 2. *It is the testimony of personal experience, as well as that of popular opinion.* It is not the result of hearsay or a second-hand report, but they had heard Jesus with their own ears, and seen with their own eyes the wonderful effect he had on the multitudes, and this was the testimony of their own personal experience and observation: "Never man," etc. 3. *It is a great but a natural testimony to Jesus as a Teacher.* "Never man," etc. There had been in the world great men among Jews and Gentiles—mighty orators, eloquent prophets, and sage philosophers; but "never man," etc., not even Moses. "Never man," etc. As much as to say that he must be more than a mere man; if not, the fact is still more extraordinary that a poor, uneducated Galilæan should eclipse all his illustrious predecessors in wisdom and Divine eloquence as a Teacher. Grant him to be the Messiah—the Son of God incarnate—then this testimony, though great, is most natural. What else could be expected? 4. *The substantial truth of this testimony is amply corroborated by the teaching of Jesus.* Although we have not the fascinating voice, the effective utterance, and the charming presence, yet sufficient is recorded to prove the unquestionable truth of the testimony. The testimony of these officers must have been inspired, for they could not fully comprehend it; still its truth has been confirmed by the most intelligent, learned, and competent judges of all succeeding ages. "Never man," etc. (1) Never man spake such Divine and sublime

*truths*—truths concerning man and God, concerning this world and the other. Never man spake as he to reason, to conscience, to the will and heart. (2) Never man spake with *such authority*, ease, naturalness, transparency, and conviction. (3) Never man spake with *such Divine effect*. To various objects—to nature, to diseases, to demons, to death, to man in all conditions, to the guilty, to the penitent, to the weary and heavy laden, etc. 5. *The genuineness of their testimony is attested by the fact that they returned without him*. His influence over them is patent to all. The strictness of the command and the fear of the consequences of failure to carry it out would naturally cause them to strain every nerve to take him. But they failed, and they could assign no other reason for their failure than the superhuman influence of his speech and doctrine. It is recorded as a proof of the eloquence of Marcus Antonius the orator, that when Marius sent soldiers to kill him, he pleaded with such eloquence for his life that they could not touch him, and they left him in tears. But here is an instance of a more captivating eloquence. Christ did not appeal to the pity of his captors, neither did he plead for his life; but he appealed to the conscience and heart, and pleaded for the life of the condemned world with such power as to disarm them. They returned without him, amazed and spell-bound with his magic eloquence, and could give no account of their failure but in the simple but touching story, "Never man," etc.

CONCLUSIONS. 1. *We have here a singular instance of the wrath of man being made to praise the Lord*. Instead of these officers bringing Jesus before the council to be tried and condemned, he sends them back to the council to bear witness to his excellence and preach his glory, even to his bitterest enemies. 2. *Servants and dependents are often more open to conviction than their masters and superiors*. Those who have had but few, if any, privileges are often touched by Divine truths before those who have been highly favoured. Thus the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. 3. *Jesus has often taken those who would take him*. These officers went to take him, but he took them. Saul of Tarsus is another instance, and the history of conversions through the ages is full of instances of Christ leading captivity captive. 4. *The testimony of these officers has been the testimony of all who have given Jesus a fair hearing*. Scholarship and common sense have joined the believer's experience in saying, "Never man," etc. 5. *It is not enough to admire Christ as a Teacher, but we must believe and obey him*.—B. T.

Ver. 8.—*The time of Jesus—when is it to come?* The course of life in every living thing is, to a great extent, according to a fixed order. Every human being has that in his whole appearance which tells something of the number of years he has been in the world. But in the life of the Lord Jesus there was something beyond the order of mere natural development. There was an order in his life which it depended on his own discernment and obedience to maintain. His brethren wanted him to rush at every opportunity that seemed likely to them. But Jesus was not one to pluck fruit before it was ripe. He began quietly, went on gradually, builded things up, and then, when the hour for full revelation came, the revelation came with it.

I. THE PARTICULAR SEASON FOR WHICH JESUS WAS WAITING. His brethren wanted him to make the best of the crowd that would be at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles, however, was only a secondary occasion compared with the Feast of the Passover. There could have been nothing to remember at the Feast of Tabernacles unless, first of all, there had been something to remember at the Feast of the Passover. All other glorious recollections which Israel had to cherish with gratitude and hope came out of the deliverance from Egypt. Thus, at the Feast of the Passover, the time of Jesus fully came, and the coming was made manifest by his public and triumphal entry. The multitude surrounding him had come up for the Passover, like himself. They shout "Hosannah!" that is, they utter forth a prayer for salvation. And this prayer was soon answered, though not as the multitude expected, and not in a way that many of them would profit by. Jesus was just about to be delivered over to men, that men might do their worst to him. Then, when men had done their worst, his Father in heaven would do his best. Everything was done just at the right time. And all this comes forth from that Lord of hosts who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. It is just what we should expect, that God's great dealings in grace should have about them the order and regularity which mark his dealings in nature.

II. **HOW WE ARE TO PROFIT BY THE FULL COMING OF THE TIME OF JESUS.** We can only profit by the coming of this time as we make it to profit. The time of Jesus has to come fully with each of us. Not a human being who has ever trod this planet but has to come somewhere and somehow in contact with Jesus. We can no more escape Jesus than we can escape death. Life is narrowing day by day, and we are getting pushed on to a wicket-gate where face-to-face dealing with Jesus is inevitable. The time has fully come for Jesus to be showing something of his saving power in our experience. Whenever Jesus, in the days of his flesh, met with those who had divers diseases and infirmities, the time was fully come for him to take those diseases and infirmities away. And so the time of Jesus is fully come to save whenever the sinner feels his need of saving. When the lifeboat is built and put in the lifeboat-house, the time is fully come for the boat to do its work. Whenever the work is ready for it, it is ready for the work. So Jesus is ready for the sinner whenever the sinner is ready for him. Ready to save, ready to govern, ready to comfort, ready to put in the way of a full recompense for an obedient life.—Y.

Ver. 17.—*Christ's authority and the way to ascertain it.* It was very natural for a Jerusalem audience to say with respect to Jesus, "Why should we listen to this Man?" 1. It is very natural that any one making special claims should be regarded with special caution. Jesus knew quite well that he would not be readily received on his own valuation. Thanks are owing to those who opposed and criticized him in the days of his flesh. Their very way of talking to him, the true Teacher, showed how little the instruction of other teachers had done for them. 2. Jesus had not been brought up among the people who were recognized as having the right to send forth teachers. As we should say, Jesus had not been to Oxford or Cambridge. He would not speak like an educated Jew of Jerusalem, but like the son of a working-man from far-off Galilee. So Jesus had to explain the marvel how he seemed to know the Law and the Prophets at least as well as those whose whole lives had been spent in acquiring the knowledge.

I. **LOOK AT THE CLASS WHO ARE SPECIALLY INTERESTED IN THIS VERSE.** Those who wanted to know something certain about the authority and doctrine of Christ. These people in Jerusalem had all sorts of thoughts about Jesus. Some said he was a *good man*; others, a *deceiver of the people*. It was once said of him that he cast out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. Some thought he was Elijah; some Jeremiah, or, at all events, one of the prophets. There was no certainty about him in the minds of many. And in the minds of many the same uncertainty still prevails. Learned men spend years examining the Gospels, and they have nothing indubitable to report in the end. Yet be sure Jesus wants *effectually to help all that are in real perplexity about him*. Did he not say, "Blessed is he whosoever is not offended in me"?

II. **HOW THIS CLASS IS TO BE HELPED.** This class will always find a stumbling-block in Jesus till it grows through a great inward change. Those who have no will to do the will of God will never find out the truth as it is in Jesus. Our own self-will and self-conceit form the greatest stumbling-block. Self-willed people find it very uncomfortable the more they come to close quarters with Jesus. He never speaks without contradicting some dear desire of the unrenowned heart. Jesus was ever on the look-out for people who wanted to do the will of God—people who felt they had come into the world to do the will of him who made them and the world into which they had come. God has his *wishes* just as much as any of us. A conscientious and loving servant, who is far away from his master, will ever have the thought of the master's wish before him; and when oftentimes he sees not quite clearly what the master would have him to do, he will be on the look-out for every source of instruction. If, then, at such a moment a messenger should come from the master, meanly clad, and with a message written on a scrap of the commonest paper, he will not think less of the message if it tells him just what he wants to know. When John Williams the missionary was building his chapel in Barotonga, he had occasion one day to send to his wife for something he had forgotten, so he scribbled the necessary message on a chip with a bit of charcoal. He took the materials at hand, but the message was none the less valid, none the less understood. And so the greatest of all messages, from the infinite and eternal God, is none the less his message because it came through One who was born in the lowliest surroundings and brought up in the home of a Galilean working man. If we

are resolutely on the side of God, God will help us into all truth, security, peace, and blessedness.—Y.

Ver. 37.—*Good news for the thirsty.* Jesus uttered forth this cry on the great day of the feast—a time of ceasing from work, a time of solemn assembly. Quietly as Jesus had gone up to the feast, by this time he had become the Centre of a vast concourse. Because the concourse would be vast and not over-quiet, and also because his message, if important, was tremendously important, he cried. We feel that, in doing this, that voice which spake as never man spake would only rise from sweetness to sublimity.

I. WHY DID JESUS PUT HIS INVITATION IN THIS PARTICULAR WAY? It could hardly be because of the present surroundings of the people. Jerusalem was plentifully supplied with water. Not a soul in the crowd but could get a drink very quickly. The main reason must be found in the feast which had brought the people together. It was the feast instituted to commemorate the forty years in the wilderness, and serious people would call to mind all the events of that period. Prominent among the experiences of wandering Israel was the miraculous supply of water. Where would the people have been but for the God who turned bitter waters into sweet, and made springs to burst forth in the desert? Thus the observers of the feast would be led to think of the intenser thirst of the inward man. Jesus tried to put the truth in every possible way. What did not catch the experience of one would catch that of another. Not everybody would this appeal of the Lord touch. They would not have been through the experiences and reflections which gave a proper feeling of the urgency and the pain of thirst. But if in all that crowd hearing the cry of Jesus there was but one, only one, who had known the agonies of thirst far away in some sandy waste where no water was, it was worth while for Jesus to shout aloud so that that single man might hear.

II. HOW THIS INVITATION IS TO BE MADE ATTRACTIVE TO US. We know nothing by our own experience of dry and thirsty lands. Wander anywhere through broad England and you can get a drink of water for the asking. We may sometimes have been inconvenienced a little, but that is no sufficient experience of thirst which lasts only for an hour or two. Reading accounts of some shipwrecks, we may gather a little of the feeling. Coleridge puts it thus in 'The Ancient Mariner'—

“Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.”

Of all the physical wants man can feel, none is capable of being raised to such a pitch of intensity as the want of water. So, down underneath the figure Jesus employs, there is a suggestion of the *terrible suffering some have to undergo in finding spiritual truth and peace*. As few comparatively know the full suffering of bodily thirst, so few comparatively know the full suffering of spiritual thirst. Few know such a state of heart as would warrant them in saying that their souls *thirst* for God. The way of agony is the way some must travel before they can be filled with the fulness of God. But intense agony in the sphere of the spiritual, as in the sphere of the natural, must be an exceptional thing. Yet who can tell but he may illustrate the exceptional, and so need to get guidance through the word of Jesus here? There are many things that say, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Then the thirsty drink, and find their thirst unquenched and intensified. We may have our natural Elims. What if they change to Marahs? What if the rushing stream dries away to a few tantalizing and useless drops?—Y.

## EXPOSITION.

### CHAPTER VIII.

Ch. vii. 53—viii. 11.—(8) *The pericope adulteræ.* (a) *Excursus on the genuineness of ch. vii. 53—viii. 11.* It is our duty to examine the various grounds on which this passage has been almost universally

concluded to have formed no portion of the original Fourth Gospel; and then the internal grounds on which it has been rejected, and some of the speculations as to its origin and value.

Doubts have beset the authenticity of the passage from the fourth and fifth centuries

in the Eastern Church, both on external and internal grounds. The authority and practice of Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome gave it a secure resting-place till the criticism of Erasmus re-awakened doubt. Calvin expressed a more favourable opinion concerning it. Jansenius rejected it. Grotius considered it as an addition to John's Gospel from the hand of Papias or one of his friends and fellow-disciples of John. Wettstein, Semler, Griesbach, and Wegscheider seemed to leave for it no place in Scripture. Lachmann omitted it from his text. It has been condemned as spurious by the great bulk of modern critics, even of different schools and on somewhat different grounds. Some have rejected it as a spurious forgery (see Hengstenberg, *in loc.*); Keim derives much the same conclusion from its supposed teaching; others have admitted that, though it is not without a powerful apostolic ring about it, yet its proper place was probably at the close of *Luka xxi.*, where it is found in cursive 69 and three other cursives (13, 124, 346). Others (Scrivener) that, from its interruption of the narrative, it has no place here, but may be possibly regarded as an appendix to John's Gospel, or a part of the later edition of that Gospel which contained *ch. xxi.* There is no sufficient ground on which to build this hypothesis of two editions (*cf. notes on ch. xxi. 1*). There are, however, manuscripts which preserve the paragraph in this position, viz. the cursive 1, and the majority of the Armenian manuscripts. A very damaging note accompanies it in 1 (*see Tregelles, who gives it at length*). The following critical editors have either displaced it or entirely rejected it from this place in John's Gospel, though many among them admit its virtual authenticity as a record of a genuine occurrence in the life of our Lord: Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Alford, Lücke, Meyer, Godet, Milligan, Scrivener, Moulton, Westcott and Hort, the Revised Text, and even Weiss and Wordsworth. On the other hand, it has been defended by Mill, Lampe, Michaelis, by Bengel, Scholz, Wieseler, Ebrard, Lange, Stier, McClellan, and by some of the Tübingen school like Hilgenfeld, who, attaching it to the Gospel, have made use of it to destroy the historic character of the Gospel itself. Griesbach retains it with double marks of doubt. Farrar,

summarizing Lücke's discussion of the evidence, inclines rather in its favour, and thinks it may have been early admitted into the Fourth Gospel from that according to the Hebrews, or from some *Ur-marcus* (Holtzmann). McClellan and Stier vehemently maintain it on both internal and external grounds. Edersheim says that it presents "insuperable difficulties in the 'un-Jewish' account given of the accusers, the witnesses, the public examination, the bringing of the woman to Jesus, and the punishment claimed." Renan, 'Ecce Homo,' and Farrar have made very powerful biographic use of the narrative.

*The evidence against it is:* 1. That *8*, (*Δ*), *B*, (*Ο*), (*Λ*), *X*, (*Δ*), 33, 131, and 157 omit it. *A* and *C* are here defective, but they leave no sufficient space for its insertion; *L* and *Δ* leave gaps, to notify some omission, which the copyist for some reason did not or dared not fill. Though found in *D*, *E*, *F*, *G*, *H*, *K*, *M*, *S*, *V*, *T*, *Δ*, *A*, *Π*, and numerous cursives, it is nevertheless obelized in some of the former as doubtful.

The first Greek writer in the twelfth century (Euthymius Zygadenus) who in this portion of the Gospel refers to the passage distinctly says that from *ch. vii. 53* to *viii. 11* the passage was not found, or it was obelized in the *most accurate copies*; wherefore, he adds, it was first a gloss, and then an appendix (*παρέγραπτα*, "written alongside of," *καὶ προσθήκη*, "added to"), and "a token of this is seen in the fact that Chrysostom had made no mention of it."

2. It was found in different places, even in several of the manuscripts which contain it (*see above*).

3. Ancient versions, such as some of the Italic, Ægyptian, Old Syriac, Gothic, early manuscripts of the Peshito and Armenian Versions, omit it.

4. It was not read by Tertullian (*see 'De Pudic.'* c. 6), Cyprian, Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, and Theophylact, where it might have been expected.

5. Though found in *D* (*Codex Bezae*), yet this testimony, without confirmation, throws doubt over it, by its adoption of the paragraph. *D* has given us several other additions (*such as Matt. xx. 28; Luke vi. 5*), which have never passed into authentic Scripture.



Moreover, the text of D here differs from that of the later uncials in which it occurs, as well as from the body of cursives which contain it. Lücke powerfully argues, from the silence of Chrysostom and Origen, that they were in positive ignorance of the existence of the passage. The defenders of its authenticity allege that Origen's commentary and homilies are lacking or mutilated over the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters. While this is true, Origen ('Tom.,' xix.) points out the connection between ch. vii. 40 and viii. 12 without making the faintest reference to this *pericope*. "No *catenæ* as yet examined contain notes on any of these verses" (Westcott and Hort).

6. The nature of the text differs from that with which it is supposed to be imbedded, as, for instance, in the use of the particle *ὅτι* in place of *οὗτως* (John's favourite particle), and of other words which are peculiar to itself, and certain expressions, such as "Mount of Olives," "sat and taught," etc., which are current in Luke and elsewhere (but see further for the value of this evidence).

7. The Constant. lection for Whit Sunday consists of ch. vii. 37—52, followed immediately by ch. viii. 12. Such an omission from John's Gospel is only noticeable elsewhere where special reason can be assigned for it.

8. With the exception of the 'Apostolic Constitutions,' the *Greek* writers and commentators are ignorant of it, and there is no proof of its existence in any extant manuscript earlier than the sixth century.

The sum of this is that the most ancient known authorities are, from one cause or other (whether necessary, accidental, or prudential), silent concerning the passage; that mutilations of Scripture cannot be common offences, even though a strong ascetic spirit might be tempted to refuse a *public reading* of this paragraph, and to abstain from public comment on so difficult a passage.

*The evidence for the paragraph is:* 1. First and foremost, the Codex D and the later uncials (E), (F), G, H, K, M, I, (S), T, U, A (but in E, F, and S great doubts are expressed; F has a space to ver. 10; I ends at ver. 3). D probably belongs to the fifth or sixth century, K to the eighth or ninth, and the remaining uncials belong to the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth century. The whole

group is, with the exception of T, representative of the Syrian Recension. Some of the best manuscripts of the Vulgate contain it, and the *Æthiopic* and *Memphitic Versions*. Griesbach enumerates a hundred cursives—Alford says three hundred—and especially in Latin manuscripts referred to by Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome.

2. The supposed presence of it in the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews' turns on the statement preserved by Eusebius in his account of Papias (of which we have other reasons for doubting the accuracy), 'Hist. Eccl.,' iii. 40, "He exhibits also another history concerning a woman (*διαβληθείσης*) calumniously accused before the Lord of many sins, which is contained in the Gospel according to the Hebrews." On the credit of this statement, that apocryphal Gospel has been supposed to contain the famous passage. The idea is thrown out that John or his earliest editors may have sought to find a place for it, and imagined that the event preceded the solemn assertion of ch. viii. 15, "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no one." This ingenious supposition tells both ways. If the passage is an importation from the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' Eusebius becomes a witness that, in his day, and by him, it was *not* regarded as an integral portion of *John's* Gospel. The very early existence of the narrative is, however, avouched, and the possible method suggested by which either John or the Ephesian presbyters adopted it. But there is no proof that this narrative is identical with a story no details of which are preserved. The *slandorous* or *secret* accusation of a woman is not parallel with the autoptic, uncontradicted assertion of ch. viii. 4, that she was "taken in the very act." Nor is the accusation of "many sins" identical with the charge of one revolting crime. It is significant that Ruffinus, in his version of Eusebius, substitutes "a woman, an adulteress," for "a woman accused of many sins." This may have been due to his acquaintance with Jerome's translation of the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews.' Moreover, on the supposition of identity, the story would more probably have been found in the cognate Gospel of Matthew than in the numerous manuscripts of the Fourth Gospel.

3. The testimony of ancient writers can be set over against the silence of Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, etc. Thus, 'Apost. Const.,' ii. 24, refers to the narrative, in vindication of the true reception of penitents. After referring to Luke vii., the writers say, "Another woman who had sinned, the elders placed before him, and left the judgment in his hands, and went out; but the Lord, who knoweth the hearts, having inquired of her whether the elders had condemned her, and she having said 'No,' said, 'Go, then; neither do I condemn thee.'" This testimony cannot be positively made to show that the passage was in any Greek text earlier than the third century, and no reference occurs in it to the Gospel of John. The reference is valuable for the antiquity of the *Gospel*, if other reasons establish this passage as an integral portion of that Gospel.

4. The passage was undoubtedly admitted as part of the Gospel by both Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose, and many later Fathers of the Western Church. Jerome did not discard it from the Vulgate Version, and distinctly says that it was found "in multis et Græcis et Latinis codicibus," and that it was read on the Feast of St. Pelagia (October 8). Ambrose quoted from it ('De Spir. Sancto,' iii. 2. 15), and reproached those who made a bad use of it. Augustine ('Adv. Pelag.,' ii. 17) admits that some were afraid of the passage, lest it should lead to laxity of morals, and so had erased it (*aufferrent*) from their codices. Augustine comments on it verse by verse, and preached from several texts found in it.

5. The internal evidence in favour is the weakness of the objections which are said to arise: (1) From the use of words and phrases foreign to John, and of proper names without explanations. Thus, "Mount of Olives" is referred to for the only time. But it must be admitted that "Kedron" thus occurs (ch. xviii. 1). Πᾶς ὁ λαός is said to be discrepant from the Johannine phrase ὄχλος, used so frequently in ch. vii. and elsewhere, and is scarcely answered by McClellan when he says it is antithetic to "the doctors of the Law," itself an un-Johannine phrase. The statement that Jesus "sat down to teach" may not elsewhere be found in the Fourth Gospel. It

is implied, however, that he was seated during the discourse of ch. xiii., xiv. The use of such words as καταγράφειν, ἀναμάρτητος, ἐπιμένειν, καταλείπεσθαι, cannot prove anything whatever, as we may find in every chapter of John, and still more of the Apocalypse, ἀπαξ λεγόμενα. Much is made of the absence of οὖν, John's favourite particle, and the frequent use of δέ. But John uses οὖν two hundred and six times in his Gospel, and δέ two hundred and four times. Moreover, οὖν does not occur in ch. i. 1—20; iii. 1—24; iv. 12—27; xi. 22—30; nor in ch. xiv., xv., xvii. (McClellan). Very little argument ought to rest on this peculiarity. (2) It is stated that the paragraph breaks the continuity of the narrative, which properly follows on ver. 45 or 52. This is not so clear. The Sanhedrin and the people disperse at the conclusion of Christ's discourse; that last day of the feast is ended. Ch. viii. 1 introduces a new day, the dawn of the morning when the event occurred providing Christ with his illustration, "I am the Light of the world;" and the recent occurrence, with the potent illustration of the declaration, "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no one." (3) The judgment of stoning is said to be the punishment adjudged to the man and woman, if the woman be the betrothed spouse of another man. In Deut. xxii. 22 and Lev. xx. 10 death, without specifying the manner of it, is the punishment of adultery; in Deut. xxii. 24 the case of fornication with a betrothed virgin is punished with stoning. It has been argued by some that the specification of stoning in this one case excludes it in the other case, and by others that the one crime resembles the other so much that it is sufficiently near to justify the legal question put to Christ. In 'Sanhedrin,' § vii. 4, adultery is not mentioned as a crime punishable with stoning, and in § x. 4 it is made punishable with impalement. That scribes and Pharisees should make use, without perfect accuracy, of Moses to tempt Christ does not appear to be a reason sufficient in itself to doubt the authenticity of the passage.

Our conclusion is that the passage, whether written as it stands by John or not, was introduced, in very early times, into the Western text (according to Ewald, 'Die

Joh. Schriften,' 271) as a gloss on ch. viii. 15); that the external evidence is extremely unsatisfactory and conflicting; yet it must be admitted that the silence of the great Greek Fathers concerning it is accountable without disbelieving in its existence. While Chrysostom ignores it, Ambrose insists upon its teaching, and Jerome does not see sufficient reason to expunge it. The profound originality of the lessons it conveys, and the difficulty involved in a careless reading, may account for the non-appearance of it in the earliest manuscripts, and make the motive which could have maliciously devised or imagined such a scene inconceivable. Lücke, in his elaborate treatment (vol. ii. pp. 243—278), Tregelles, and Alford, Godet, *in loco*, Lightfoot (*Contemporary Review*, vol. xxvi.), Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, declare against it in the most positive way. Meyer urges that it is not to be for a moment referred to an oral Johannine source, while it is in keeping, he says, with the tone of the synoptic Gospels. This is open to criticism. Scathing denunciations of every kind of corruption are far more frequent in the synoptic Gospels (cf. Matt. v.—vii., xxiii., etc.) than in the Fourth Gospel.

The most formidable objection is the state of the text, which, in addition to its deficiency of first-class testimony, is unusually discrepant in the authorities which preserve it. Thus there is the abridged form of the narrative in Codex Bezae (D) and the text of T.R., which rests on a large number of later uncials and cursives; and a third text, which seems like a mixture or conflation of the two texts. Lücke and Godet have suggested that the passage contains an extra-scriptural fact preserved by oral tradition that was first placed at the end of the Gospels, and therefore at the end of John's Gospel, and was by some editors and copyists inserted in this particular connection, and by others in Luke xxi. 8, in the midst of the testing to which the Sanhedrin and the sectional parties submitted our Lord during the last week of his life. Bishop Lightfoot (*Contemporary Review*, vol. xxvi. 847) thinks it may have been one of the illustrative anecdotes in the Collectanea of Papias. The only other illustration to which he refers is the supposed saying of our Lord preserved in Eusebius's account of

Papias, with reference to the extraordinary fertility of the vine in the latter days—a passage which Lightfoot thinks may have been originally attached to Matt. xxvi. 29. That such an event did happen, and that we have here an authentic record of what occurred, is accepted by the great bulk of critics, who, nevertheless, expunge it from the text of John, on the combined ground of its internal difficulty and deficiency of external attestation. The difficulty, however, is one indication of the surpassing originality of the narrative. It is hard to imagine the motive which should induce any of the followers of Christ or of John to have invented it, while there are reasons, drawn from the ascetic tendencies mightily at work in certain sections of the Church, for its omission or the silence of homilists.

Though the spirit, atmosphere, and phrase suggest the synoptic tradition rather than the Johannine, yet it must not be forgotten that there are many synoptic passages in John's Gospel, and Johannine phrases in the synoptists. The criticism proceeding from moral timidity has failed to recognize the grandeur of the entire proceeding. It contains no palliation of incontinence, but a simple refusal of Jesus to assume the position of a civil Judge or Executor of the law in face of the established political supremacy of Rome; while the Lord made a demand for personal holiness, and an appeal to conscience so pungent that, in lieu of condemning to death a sinful woman, he judged a whole crowd of men, convincing them of sin, while he gave the overt transgressor time for repentance and holier living.

Ch. vii. 53.—viii. 11.—(b) *The plot against the honour or loyalty of the Lord Jesus foiled.*

Ch. vii. 53.—And every one went<sup>1</sup> to his own house. If the plural be here taken, it more obviously refers to the breaking up of the assembly, of the divided groups, as well as of the angry Sanhedrin for the day now drawing to its close. The strong opponents of the passage see in the clause the mark of an interpolator who makes use of a phrase strictly applicable from its presumed place to the Sanhedrin, but intended clumsily to refer to the crowds who had been taking part in the dramatic scene. There would,

<sup>1</sup> D reads ἐπορεύθη; but the plural is better attested. Some manuscript pts and versions read ἀπῆλθεν or ἀπῆλθον.

however, be no impropriety in the reference to the cessation of an extraordinary session or committee of the Sanhedrin, when the officers had returned without their prize.

Ch. viii. 1.—But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. This resort of our Lord is not elsewhere referred to in John's Gospel, although it was mentioned by St. Luke (xxi. 37; xxii. 39) as the scene of the Lord's retirement during the nights of the last week of his life. John's mention of such a habit as this at an earlier period would in almost any other literature be regarded as mutual confirmation of the two documents, while the fact that "Bethany" lay on the opposite side of the hill, and the "garden" was, as a matter of fact, hidden on its slopes, and that both of these facts are known to the writer (ch. xi. and xix.) deprive the bare mention of the name of any inauthentic character.

Ver. 2.—Now at daybreak. The word *ῥῆθρον* does not occur in John; *πρωτὰ* and *πρωτα* are our evangelist's words for "early morning," though *ὑπὸ τὸν ῥῆθρον* is found in Luke xxiv. 1 and Acts v. 21. He came again to the temple (the temple-courts—*ἱερόν*, not *ναός*, is here used); and all the people came to him. The form *πᾶς ὁ λαός* is a deviation from John's usual phrase, although *λαός* is found in ch. xi. 50 and xviii. 14. There is some ground for the deviation. The scenes of the previous day had been broken up into various groups. The favouring crowd from the provinces sympathized with a portion of the Jerusalem populace; then the hostile crowd at the beck of the authorities had been checked by the "officers" who had been themselves baffled and thunderstruck with the dignity and claims of Jesus. Great excitement had prevailed, and before the stormy scenes and recriminations of the previous day recommenced, the whole temple throng came unto him. If the eighth day of the feast was referred to—i.e. if the great day of the feast were the eighth day—the difficulty of the whole people having gathered about him is diminished, because there were special gatherings for the eighth day (see notes, ch. vii. 37). It might have seemed that they had composed their differences, and were now waiting some symptom and signal of the great Leader's will. [And he sat down, and was teaching them.<sup>1</sup>] This expression is synoptic rather than Johannine; i.e. it belongs to the methods of the Galilean ministry (Matt. v. 1; Mark ix. 35) rather than to the hostile encounters of the metropolis (but see Matt. xxiii. 2). He was prepared for long discourse and various instruction. Here, as in ch. vii. 14, the word *ἐδίδασκε* is used

without specifying the topic or theme on which he dwelt. The calm morning was soon overclouded, and the people violently excited, by a very ominous disturbance, planned with subtle care and malicious intention on the part of the authorities, who were ready at all costs and by any device to break the spell which Jesus was exerting over some of the people.

Ver. 3.—And the scribes and Pharisees are bringing—dragging by main force—to him<sup>1</sup> a woman taken in adultery;<sup>2</sup> and, having caused her—forced her, notwithstanding the hideous shame of her discovery—to stand in the midst, they say unto him, Master.<sup>3</sup> The "scribes" are not elsewhere referred to in John's Gospel, although the phrase, "scribes and Pharisees," is very frequently used in the synoptic Gospels for the opponents of our Lord and the subjects of his invective. They come together in the final scenes as combining to thwart and tempt him. John refers to "Pharisees" twenty times, and four times in connection with the "priests;" but never with the "scribes." The scribes are elsewhere in the New Testament spoken of as *νομικοί* or *νομοδιδάσκαλοι*, and also as "rabbis" in the Mishna. The scribes and Pharisees are no deputation from the Sanhedrin, nor are they representatives of the party of Zealots, as some have pretended. There is no indication of any mere sectional animosity or of any genuine desire to receive an authoritative or prophetic response to their inquiry. The Sanhedrin itself would certainly not have condescended at this epoch to have submitted any question of its own action to the arbitrament of Jesus. Numerous witnesses of the act of adultery are inconceivable, though in the excitement and confusion of the Feast of Tabernacles in a crowded city and suburbs, this may have been more feasible than might otherwise be supposed. The probability is that the act was undeniably committed in such a way as to bring this woman under the cognizance of these reformers or defenders of the theocracy who cropped up on all sides, and that a group of bigots saw at once that capital might be made for their antagonism to Jesus by proposing to him a query which would, however it might

<sup>1</sup> Omitted by D and four uncial manuscripts, and by R.T.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἐν* in D, M, S, V, and a hundred cursives; but *ἐν* in E, G, H, K, etc. The *ἐπὶ* is preserved by R.T. D reads *ἀμαρτία*; most other authorities read *μοιχεία*.

<sup>3</sup> D, *Λέγουσιν ἐκπεράζοντες ὑπὸν οἱ ἱερεῖς ἵνα ἐχῶν κατηγορίαν αὐτοῦ* "The priests tempting him, that they might have accusation against him, say." This clause is transposed from the close of ver. 6.

<sup>1</sup> This clause is omitted by D.

be answered, lower his prestige. According to ver. 10 (omitted in Codex B), these scribes and Pharisees were, if not the "witnesses" of adultery, the "accusers" ready to take the case before the highest court. Considering the long desuetude of the Law, and the impossibility of even the Sanhedrin legally inflicting the penalty of stoning, even if it were so disposed, the whole question looks like a subtle but ill-considered plot to entangle the Lord in his judgments, and to induce him to sacrifice his influence with the people. The absence of the guilty man is noteworthy (Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22).

Ver. 4.—Master—Teacher—this woman has been taken committing adultery, in the very act. Ἐπαυτοφάρφ originally meant in *ipso furto*, "in the very theft;" afterwards more generally in the commission of this particular sin. The burning shame and bestial bluntness of the charge make no excuse or palliation possible.

Ver. 5.—Now Moses in the Law commanded us, that such should be stoned (or, to stone *euch*): but what sayest thou?¹ The Law (Deut. xxii. 23, etc.) prescribed stoning for both parties when the woman is the *betrothed* bride of another man, and if she make no sufficient attempt to foil the purpose of her seducer. For ordinary adultery the death-penalty is left indefinite (Lev. xx. 10). It is no proof that strangulation was the method of punishment in the days of our Lord because the Talmud and Maimonides thus express it.² Meyer concludes that the woman was a *betrothed* bride. This offence is, broadly speaking, "adultery" of an aggravated kind. The reference to the method of the punishment is not demonstrable proof of this, because it would be easily feasible to transfer the method of the death from the extreme case to the ordinary case of nuptial infidelity (cf. Exod. xxxi. 14 for the punishment of unspecified death for sabbath-violation (repeated Exod. xxxv. 2), interpreted of "stoning" in the special illustrative case, Numb. xv. 32—36). This is Moses' Law—"what sayest thou?" This query involves an ascription to Jesus of the right of authoritatively interpreting the Law, thus attributing to him the functions of a new legislator. Some have objected to the bare possibility of such an appeal being made to Jesus by any species of Jewish authority. The whole context shows that the process was malicious,

ironical, crafty. The entire audience knew that this law had never been accepted or applied literally; that the Sanhedrin had not enforced it; and that, if they had endeavoured to do so, the Roman power had taken from the nation the *jus gladii*. The question, therefore, became one of casuistry inflamed by a concrete case, and having as its ally a secret sympathy with the offenders. It was not uncommon for the rabbis to discuss the incidence of *obsolete* laws. Many of the glosses upon the ancient law, and laborious trifling with specific regulations of the so-called oral law, turn upon customs that were absolutely impracticable under the new conditions of the Jewish life. This, however, was no mere quibble of words about possible duties. The query was put with dramatic force and in concrete form. The shame and life of a fellow-creature were the materials which this eager and bloodthirsty group were utilizing for their vile purpose.

Ver. 6.—But this they said tempting him, that they might have (whereof) to accuse him. They sought a ground of formal accusation against Jesus. This implies some court before which the charge they desired to formulate it might be brought. The precise accusation is difficult to determine, and sundry distinguished scholars, Lücke, De Wette, and Alford, declare the problem or question insoluble. Augustine has been followed by a great body of expositors, who have supposed that an affirmative reply would have been inconsistent with the gentleness and mildness of our Lord's treatment of sinners, while a negative reply would at once have given them a charge to bring before the Sanhedrin of such a relaxation of the Law as would endanger his position as a Rabbi, still more as the Prophet like unto Moses. Almost all critics agree as to the use to which Christ's enemies were ready to put a *negative* reply, and therefore they coincide with Augustine in this part of his explanation. But the interpretation put upon the *affirmative* reply would not furnish the ground of any accusation before any court. An apparent inconsistency would be no civil charge, and would have no weight before any legal tribunal. The condemnation of adulterers to death by stoning would have been Christ's allowance of the letter of the Law to stand. The Romans could take no umbrage at this until the act had been carried into execution. It may probably have been known that, let the Sanhedrin record what verdict and punishment they pleased, the Roman magistrates would not have carried it into capital execution. How, then, could the scribes and Pharisees have carried an accusation or information before a Roman tribunal? The solution was sug-

¹ D here reads, Μωσῆς δὲ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ἐκέλευσεν τὰς τοιαύτας λιθαίνειν· συ δὲ νῦν τί λέγεις; T.R., Ἐν δὲ τῷ νόμῳ Μωσῆς ἡμῖν ἐνετείλατο τὰς τοιαύτας λιθοβολεῖσθαι· συ οὖν τί λέγεις;

² "Filia Israelitæ, si adultera cum nupta, strangulanda, cum desponsata tantum, lapidanda" ('Sanh.,' fol. 51. 2).

gested by Baumgarten-Crusius and Luthardt, and adopted by Moulton, that Christ was asked to say "Aye" or "No" to an instant, tumultuous act of vengeance upon the adulteress. Let him say "No," they would accuse him of deliberately ignoring and repudiating the authority of the Law of Moses; let him say "Yes," they were ready to stone the woman there and then, and subsequently to throw the responsibility of such violation of Roman jurisdiction upon the Lord Jesus as its instigator. Meyer's objection, that no question at all had been put to Christ on this supposition, is not clear. It was this. Clearly apprehending that adultery is a capital offence, and that there was a case before them upon which no doubt could be thrown, they ask him, with the stones in their hands, "Shall we kill this damsel or not?" If he says "No," then they were prepared to denounce the Prophet for his dogmatic trifling with the Law; if "Yes," they are ready to do the deed, and fasten upon Jesus all the shame and guilt of the proceeding before the Roman governor. It was a very analogous problem to that concerning the tribute money recorded in Matt. xxii. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger was writing on the ground (*eis τὴν γῆν*, into the earth). Some manuscripts, E, G, and about ninety cursives, add, *μὴ προσποιούμενος*, "not troubling himself with them"—"as though he heard them not" (Authorized Version).<sup>1</sup> This act is unparalleled in Scripture, even if the custom is still occasionally practised in the East. Mr. O'Neil, in his instructive volume, 'Palestine Explored,' records a curious instance of a youth, who, after playing some practical joke upon an old man, feigned utter ignorance of the surprise and cry of the old man by instantaneously assuming the position of one entirely abstracted from all sublimary thought, in fact, by sitting on the ground and scribbling with his finger in the dust, "as though he heard and saw nothing of what had happened." Such an intention can only be attributed to our Lord on the understanding that it was a current method of indicating an indisposition to have anything to say to the intruders. He was seated; he turned aside from the excited crowd, and by a significant symbol expressed his displeasure at their proceedings, and his perception of their craftiness. Conjecture has been busy, but vainly, with the inquiry as to what our Lord wrote on the ground, and some have urged (Godet) that he wrote the memorable sentence which follows, as a judge might write the verdict upon the case

submitted to him. This is not probable, and it would detract from the symbolism of the act.

Vers. 7, 8.—But when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself,<sup>1</sup> and said unto them, He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and with his finger<sup>2</sup> was writing on the ground. The imperfect tense of *ἔγραφεν*, twice repeated, seems more in harmony with the symbolic meaning of the act than with the record on his part of any special sentence of his supreme wisdom. Christ refused to act the part of the civil magistrate, or to countenance a stormy outbreak of murderous passion against this flagrant sinner, to save himself from their bitter malice. He rose, when the appearance of indifference could not be maintained, and at once arrested the outbreak of their unscrupulous fury without presuming to repudiate the letter of the Law. He lifted the discussion from the judicial to the moral sphere. He does not mean that none but the sinless can condemn, or pronounce verdict upon the guilty; but he calls for special freedom from similar offence on the part of any man who should wish or dare to display his own purity by taking part in the execution. The narrative would not suggest that every one of these accusers had been in his time guilty of like offence, but *ἀναιδέπρως* must at least mean that he was free from the desires which might lead to the commission of such sin, and Christ calls for inward saintliness and freedom from all irregular propension. He calls for personal chastity as the only possible moral condition for precipitately executing this ancient and severe law. The question before the crowd (asked so craftily) was, not whether Moses' Law was to stand or not, but whether these particular men, with their foul hearts and spurious zeal, were or were not at that particular moment to encounter the displeasure of Roman power by dashing the stones at the head of this poor trembling creature of sin and shame; whether they were morally competent to condemn to immediate death, and carry the verdict into execution. Before this tremendous summons from the Holy One, conscience could sleep no longer. The hypocrisy of the entire manoeuvre stared them in the face.

Ver. 9.—And they when they heard it

<sup>1</sup> D reads *ἀνέκλινεν καὶ*; and T.R., *ἀνακύψας*, with E, G, H, and fifty cursives.

<sup>2</sup> R.T. here follows D. The manuscript V and others have a curious addition, *εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐνὸς ἐκάστου αὐτῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας*, "into the ground the sins of each one of them." That gloss has a very apocryphal character.

<sup>1</sup> Some manuscripts read *καὶ προσποιούμενος*, equivalent to "though he only pretended to write."

(being convicted by their<sup>1</sup> own conscience), they went out one by one. Their conscience convinced them that the spirit of the Law is greater than its letter. The phrase expressing the action of conscience was probably an explanatory and true gloss, which accounted for the sudden change of front. It was a proof of the ally which Divine law has within the human breast. The whole crowd, rather than the humbled woman, is condemned, but self-condemned and silent. This event speaks for the moral sense which had been paralyzed rather than obliterated in this people. (The expression, "one by one," *εἰς καθ' εἰς*, in which *εἰς* is treated as indeclinable, is occasionally found in later Greek, but only once in the New Testament (Mark xiv. 19), is not in D, but in several of the codices and cursives, and it is retained in R.T.) The slow rather than simultaneous disappearance of the gang of accusers is a highly dramatic touch, and the remaining clause, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last, heightens the impression. The phrase *πρεσβυτέρων* need not refer to office, but to age, and the "last" need not necessarily mean the youngest, but those that were left when the most responsible men found that they had carried their question too far, and had retired. And Jesus was left alone; i.e. so far as these accusers were concerned. The multitudes who had gathered round him were still waiting for his words (see ver. 2). This fact is involved in the substance of the narrative, whether the *pericope* belongs to the Gospel of John or not. And the woman where she was,<sup>2</sup> in the midst of the assembly that remained, more likely cowering in shame and mortal fear than "standing" brazen-faced or daring before that awful Presence. These two ("Misericordia et Misericordia," as said Augustine), "Misery and Pity," face one another, and in the presence of a multitude of disciples and other listeners, Misery waits for Pity to speak—for perfect holiness and perfect mercy to do its will. There is One seated there who *is* without sin. He is at liberty, on his own showing, to condemn, and

even to execute his fierce displeasure against a sin which he had, in his great inaugural discourse, charged upon the ill-regulated desires and evil glances of men.

Vers. 10, 11.—And Jesus lifted up himself, and said to her, Where are they? (*these thy accusers*).<sup>2</sup> The question (with or without the additions) implied that our Lord had not seen the obvious effect of his words upon the accusing party. There was no triumph in his eye, no flush of victory over his enemies. Hath no one condemned thee? pronounced upon thee the sentence of condemnation? Has no one declared that thine is a case of stoning?—No one? Then the judgment has yet to be uttered, if it be left with him. Shall he cast the first stone; and leave the multitude, having tasted blood, to complete the terrible work? She said, No one, Lord. And he said (to her), Neither do I condemn thee. He had not come to condemn, but to save. A time is coming when the Father would commit all judgment into his hands—when his awful word, "I know you not," or "Depart from me," will be the signal of doom. But now his mission is to heal, not to wound; to comfort, not to punish; to reveal the heart of God, not to execute the crude judgments of men; to soothe, not to stone. He does not say, "Be of good courage; thy sins are forgiven." He does not say, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven;" "Her faith hath saved her;" but, Go, and henceforth sin no more.<sup>3</sup> He justifies the position that he will not quench the smoking flax nor break the bruised reed. He condemns the sin, but for a while spares the sinner. He refuses to set up his judgment against Moses, or take into his human hands the administration of civil or political law. He does not say, "Go in peace," or "Go to peace;" but from this moment, this awful "now" (*ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν*), "sin no more." The reticence and abruptness of the narrator are not like the style of apocryphal writers. Such a narrative could not have been invented by the second-century disciples, by doctetic Ebionites, by the ordinary fabricators

<sup>1</sup> D has here a shortened text: 'Ἐκαστος δὲ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐξήρχετο, ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ὥστε πάντας ἐξελεῖν, "Each of the Jews went out, beginning from the elders, so that all went out." T.R. has admitted the clause, *καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς συνειδήσεως ἐλεγχόμενοι*, which is found in E, G, H, etc., but omitted by D, M, U, and some eighty-three cursives. The R.T. treats it as a gloss.

<sup>2</sup> D, with ten uncials and a hundred and seventy cursives, reads *οὐσα*, in lieu of the *ἐστῶσα* of T.R., which has the support of 1 and several versions.

<sup>1</sup> The T.R. adds the clause, *καὶ μηδένα θεασάμενος πλὴν τῆς γυναῖκος*, "and having seen no one save the woman," on the authority of E, G, H, K, and some cursives, more than sixty; but it is omitted by D, M, S, and about thirty other cursives and versions, and by R.T.

<sup>2</sup> 'Εκεῖνοι οἱ κατήγοροί σου; of the T.R. is defended by a great number of authorities; but D, M, R, Δ, I, and about thirty cursives and some versions omit the words, with R.T.

<sup>3</sup> D reads *ὑπάγε*; and D, with a large following, reads (*καὶ*) *ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μηκέτι*. R.T. reads, *πορεύου ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μηκέτι ἀμάρτανε*.

of apocryphal literature. If the text is so varied, conflicting, and ill-sustained as to envelop it in doubt; if the place in the gospel narrative be uncertain; if the use of a few words suggests a non-Johannine source; and if the position between ch. vii. 52 and viii. 12 be difficult to accept;—there is yet nothing inconsistent with the Johannine teaching, or the sublime and unapproachable originality of the character of the Johannine Christ. The narrative will remain for all time an illustration of the blinding of judgment with mercy, which has received its highest expression in the life-work and Person of the Christ.

Ver. 12.—ch. ix. 41.—4. *Christ the Light of the world, with consequent discussions.*

Ver. 12.—(1) *The solemn and formal assertion.* If the passage we have just reviewed were an integral portion of the Gospel, and in its right place, the reference to the breaking of the morning, the first eye of the sun over the purple hills suddenly transforming their dark outline into the aspect of semi-transparent jewellery, and their misty hollows into luminous folds of light, would be the obvious meaning or reason of the new imagery which he adopted: "I am the Light of the world." If, however, the entire *pericope* is not in its correct place, we must link vers. 12—20 with the discourses of the previous chapter. On the great day of the feast, in obvious allusion to the mystic drawing of water in Siloam, and transference of it to the temple-court, Jesus had said, "If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink." Many critics imagine that now he refers to the habit, on the first evening of the Feast of Tabernacles, and probably, though not surely, on the other evenings, of kindling the golden candelabra in the court of the women, giving the signal for a brilliant illumination which was visible over the city and surrounding hills. As the water was a symbolic memorial of the smiting of the rock, so the sudden blaze in the temple-court was a similar reminder of the fiery pillar in the wilderness, and commentators have found in such ceremonial and memories an occasion for our Lord's words. Surely they go much deeper, and have a wider signification. The creation of light by the Word of the Lord, and St. John's own statement in the prologue that in the Logos was life, and the Life was the light, and the Light shone into the darkness before the Incarnation, is a more adequate interpretation. "The Word was made flesh," and this was the grand occasion for the revelation of the glory of God. "We beheld his glory," says the apostle, "that of an only begotten Son of the Father." The gospel narrative supplies the material which induced the evangelist to preface it with imposing words.

The life of men produced by him who is Life lightens the world with its glory. He is the Light of the world, because he is the Source of its life. This inversion of the sequences belonging to modern science and even to Mosaic cosmogony, partly shows what is meant by "Light," and the Light of life. Life in the Johannine thought is Divine blessedness, the very essence of Divine activity and essential being. The Father hath it *in* himself, and he has given to the Son to be similarly self-complete. He can confer this life on others, communicating his own perfection to some of the creatures of his hand, even bestowing upon them some of the essential elements of his own being. There are varied emanations and forth-puttings of this life—vegetable, animal, psychical, spiritual—and in each case the life becomes a luminous source of direction, a self-revelatory force, a *light*. The highest Life of all is the brightest Light—the true Lamp of all our seeing (see ch. i. 9 and xi. 9, 10). Jesus said, "*I am the Light of the world*," illuminating its darkness far more impressively than temple fireworks, or even pillars of radiant cloud, nay, more than the sunbeams themselves; and that because he was the Holder and Giver of life. Again therefore Jesus spake to them, saying, I am the Light of the world. The "again" may point back to the discourses of the previous chapter, or to the disturbance of the audience and the teaching of that early morning. If it were the morning of the departure of thousands from the holy city, peculiar appropriateness is felt in the continuation: He that followeth me shall not (by any means) walk in the darkness—shall not *start* off along the defiles of his pilgrimage in the murk of the night and the heavy hiding mists, but he shall, in my companionship, have the light of life. My follower will see his way. Those who have entered into living fellowship with the living One awake from all death-slumber and darkness, "walk in the light, as he is in the light;" "become light in the Lord;" "being made manifest are light;" being with the Lord become *φωστήρες*, torch-bearers to the rest; and, more than all (Matt. v. 14), are themselves "the light of the world." The Messiah had been anticipated as "*Light*," as the Light of Gentiles as well as Jews (Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6; Mal. iv. 2; cf. Luke ii. 32, where Simeon had caught the spirit of the ancient prophets). Edersheim (quoting 'Bemidb. R.' 3 and 15, and 'Yalkut on Isa. lx.'): "The rabbis speak of the original light in which God had wrapped himself as in a garment, which was so brilliant that it could not shine by day because it would have dimmed the light of the sun. From this light that of sun, moon, and stars had



been kindled. It was now reserved under the throne of God for the Messiah, in whose days it would shine once more." (The Logos was, in the language of Philo, the Archetype and the Outflow of the light.) But the entire meaning of the manifestation of the Divine life in the Messiah is the diffusion of it in others. All Christ's teaching about himself has this practical and ethical bearing. The εἶναι—"will have," "will be in possession of," light—harmonizes with all the wonderful teaching which blends the Christ and his followers in one entity. "I in them, they in me," of ch. xv., xvii.; and Paul's "Christ formed in you," "Christ liveth in me" (Col. i. 27; Gal. i. 20). "Light," says Augustine, "reveals other things and its own very self, opens healthy eyes, and is its own witness."

Vers. 13—19.—(2) *The refusal of the Pharisees to accept this claim on his unsupported testimony, and Christ's reply.*

Ver. 13.—The fact that the Pharisees respond shows that the circumstances of the previous day are changed. They have been the secret and organized opponents of Jesus throughout. The synoptic Gospels show with what perverse ingenuity and doggedness they followed him from place to place, venturing to assail him through his disciples, through his omissions of ritual, and by reason of his Divine freedom in interpreting the sacred Scripture; nor did they refrain from attributing his miracles to the power of the evil one (Matt. ix.). They were the nucleus of the bitter opposition to him current among the rulers in Jerusalem, and they reveal here a reminiscence of the discussion which had taken place in the temple or its neighbourhood after the healing of the impotent man (ch. v. 31, etc.). There the Lord had said that if he bore witness of himself, without any corroboration, his witness, thus isolated and deprived of evidence, would, on the ordinary grounds of a *prima facie* testimony, not be true; but he went on to say, further, that his testimony was variously corroborated by the manifest presence and co-operation of the Father. Forgetting thus his own vindication of himself—which many months of varied proof of his personality had confirmed for candid minds—they assail his comparison of himself to the Light of the world, with: Thou bearest witness of thyself; thy witness—according to the canon he had himself admitted and supplemented; but they forgetting the supplement, add—(thy witness) is not true. "If thou art simply making such exalted claims as this, in forgetfulness of the well-known maxim about self-witness, we take the liberty to dispute and reject it."

Ver. 14.—Jesus answered and said to them, Even if I bear witness concerning myself—in case I bear testimony, I, being

who and what I am, and surrounded by Divine attestations, charged with a consciousness of a whole army and legion of approving witnesses, and, above all, with the Father's own testimony to me—my witness is true—I satisfy in superlative fashion your own demand and also my own conceded test—because I know—*οἶδα*, with clear undisturbed self-consciousness I know, absolutely, invincibly, with perfect possession of the past and future—whence I came, and whither I am going. The whole of our Christian verities turn upon the consciousness by Jesus of that which lay before and after that human life of his. He embraced the two eternities in his inward self-consciousness. That "whence" and that "whither," with all their infinite sublimity and solemnity, give adequate evidence and sufficient weight to his personal claim to be the Light of the world, because he is the temporary Embodiment of the eternal life which was with the Father, but is manifest to men (cf. 1 John i. 4). But ye know not whence I come—am ever coming forth to you with Divine judgment and calls of mercy—nor<sup>1</sup> whither I am going. "Neither the one nor the other;" not that Christ had not repeatedly told them in various and most expressive form. They could neither grasp the origin of his Personality, nor the method in which, as Messiah, through suffering, through an equation of his lot with man's (through the form of a slave and the death of a cross), he was doing the Father's will (cf. notes, ch. vii. 27, 28; ix. 29).

Ver. 15.—You judge—*i.e.* you condemn me, you repudiate my claim to be the "Living Water" and the "Light of the world"—after the flesh (*κατὰ τὴν σάρκα*), according to the outward appearance; you look at my mere humanity. Our Lord did not accuse them of the fleshly, blinded, unjust judgments of unregenerate men. The article *τὴν*, and not the well-known formula *κατὰ σάρκα*, prevents such an interpretation. He rather reasons and pleads with them. He suggests that they might, if they would, look below the surface of his flesh. The evangelist, who reports the substance of this discussion, has written. "The Word was made flesh." So if the incarnate Word had always been judged "after the flesh," we should never have seen his glory, nor recognized the

<sup>1</sup> The authorities are evenly balanced between *ἡ* and *καί*. Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Alford, R.T., and Godet accept the former, with B, D, K, T, U, etc., 1, and fifty cursives, numerous versions and Fathers. *καί* is the reading of T.R., Griesbach, and Lachmann, with N, E, F, G, H, L. The disjunctive particle *ἡ* is here stronger and more emphatic than the assertive conjunctive *καί*.

nobler part of his Personality. I judge no man. Numerous efforts have been made to find the underlying modification of this assertion. Augustine, Chrysostom, Cyril, and many moderns add, "after the flesh," or "as you do" (the latter is the suggestion of Lücke, which, as Meyer says, comes to the same thing), or "now," pointing on to the actual assumption of his judiciary powers at the consummation of all things, and contrasting his earthly ministry of mercy with the ultimate majesty of his judgment-throne (Westcott). Storr, Moulton, Godet, suggest "I by myself"—I alone, independently of the Father, judge no man. Meyer rejects all these attempts to add to the text, and maintains that our Lord is claiming the lofty position of Saviour rather than Judge. He came with that as his primary aim, purpose, intent; to heal, not to wound; to save, not to destroy; to give time for repentance, not to hurry sinners to their doom; to illumine, not to cover with darkness. Yet even Meyer admits a practical exception of great importance to be involved in the next clause, which does not differ from Westcott's interpretation.

Ver. 16.—And yet (the *καὶ δέ*, equivalent to *atque etiam*—so Meyer, Luthardt, etc.—"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light;" "The light shineth, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." The prince of this world is judged by the simple uplifting of the Son of God; and so, though he did not come to judge or condemn, yet judgments did, by the very necessity of his nature, proceed from him) even if I judge—if by the mere contact of his purity and love and healing power with those who will not come to him for life, judgment is pronounced—my judgment is true; <sup>1</sup> i.e. trustworthy. The reading of Tischendorf, ἀληθινή, would mean that it "answers to the fundamental conception of a judgment." This thought would make the apparent paradox of the sentence more difficult to resolve. Because I am not alone, but (or, *because*, on the other hand) I and the Father who sent me, together deliver this judgment; i.e. it does not rest on my mere human consciousness, on what you who judge after the flesh might suppose it would rest, but on the eternal decisions of him who gave me my commission. The Father is in me and with me. I think the Father's thoughts and do the Father's will. Christ's testimony concern-

ing himself, his implicit judgments on human nature, his indirect condemnation of the whole crowd, by his gracious refusal to condemn the sinful woman to immediate doom, all issue forth with the sign-manual of Almighty God, with whom and in whom he dwells as the only begotten Son.

Ver. 17.—Having laid down the principle on which he was justified in maintaining the truthfulness of the assumption which the Pharisees impugned, he proceeded to vindicate, for these Jewish legalists, its agreement with the very letter of the Law. He adopted here the identical ground which was taken by him when first of all he claimed this fellowship with the Father. Yea, and in your Law it has been written, that the witness of two men is true. Many have said that here Jesus puts himself on one side as in hostility to the Law; Baur and some others plead, from the very phrase "*your Law*," that Jesus could not have used such an expression, and that John could not have recorded it; and Reuss urges that this expression agrees with the "standpoint of the gospel, which aims at lowering and degrading the old dispensation." Nothing could be less in harmony with the facts (see Introduction, § VII. 2). Even Meyer says, "The words are anti-Judaic . . . though not antinomian." Surely our Lord was simply appealing to his bitter enemies to recognize the application of the principle found in their own Law, of which they were continually making a proud boast. He simply goes to common ground of argument, and is ready to show that even the letter of the Law sustains his claim, for the sufficient reason that he is not alone, but the Father is manifestly with him. Just as he never said "our Father" when addressing his disciples, but either "my Father" or "your Father" (ch. xx. 17), because God is not the Father of men in the full sense in which he was Father to the only begotten Son; so he could not say "*our Law*" or "Moses gave us the Law" without derogating from the unique relation he sustained to the Law (compare Paul's language, Rom. ii. 17, 21, 23). The quotation from Deuteronomy <sup>1</sup> is not verbally exact; it even carries the statement of Scripture to a broader generalization, and is so worded that it applies to the case in point, by carrying the position to a legitimate consequence—"the witness of two men is true." By using the word "men," Christ suggests the contrast between two men on one side and the God-Man and the Father on the other. Lightfoot ('*Horæ Hebraicæ*') quotes '*Rosh-Shanah*,' i. 2. 3,

<sup>1</sup> Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and Meyer read ἀληθινή, with B, D, L, T, X, 33, etc.; but T.R. and R.T. read ἀληθής, with N, Γ, Δ, Λ, and eight other uncials and some Fathers, etc. Chrysostom (once) reads δικαία.

<sup>1</sup> In the LXX. of Deut. xix. 15, 'ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ ἐπὶ στόματος τριῶν μαρτύρων στήσεται πᾶν ῥήμα (cf. Deut. xvii. 6).

"that two persons well known must testify to the supreme court that they had seen the new moon! If these were unknown persons, they must bring proof that they were credible witnesses." Upon these common principles of jurisprudence the Lord was willing, in purely Jewish fashion, to rest his claim.

Ver. 18.—I am the (one) that bears witness concerning myself—I have said it, and abide by it, and I know what I say and how fully I am fulfilling these words—and the Father that sent me beareth witness concerning me. His words reflected his own Divine self-consciousness. They bore *one* witness to his unique position. They brought out the inner thoughts of Christ, and revealed the life that was light. The word, the speech, of Christ was a fire kindled which would never be extinguished—it was the formal utterance of the eternal reality; but it did not stand alone. The Father that sent him, by a long chain of events and revelations, by miracles and mighty energies, by the conference of the spirit of conviction upon the minds that gave candid attention to his verbal testimony, by the providential concurrence of facts with prophetic anticipation, was bearing witness concerning him. The argument is sufficient, so soon as we admit the terms used by Jesus, so soon as we recognize the ideas of the Son of God and of the Father, both alike revealed in the Person of Christ. We can understand, and to some extent sympathize with, the perplexity of the Pharisees. Later experiences have made it easier for us to understand the testimony of the Father, the presence and witness of God over and above the testimony of men and coincident with it (cf. ch. xv. 27; Heb. ii. 4). All great spiritual revivals have given ample proof of the twofold testimony (see 1 Thess. ii. 13; Rom. viii. 17, where Paul, the writer of the Epistle, shows himself familiar with this "Johannine" thought; cf. Heb. ii. 4).

Ver. 19.—They said to him, in angry, wilful irony. Where is thy Father?—that he may bear to thee the witness which thou art appropriating. "Thou hast freed thyself from the charge of bearing unsupported testimony to thyself, by assuming the co-ordinate testimony of thy Father? Let thy Father manifest himself!" There is no need to explain this of the absence or insignificance of the earthly father of Jesus, or to suppose that they looked for some human attestation of such a kind (Augustine, Lange). They rather scoffed at his claim of unique relation to the Father, and asked with mockery, "Where is he?" not "Who or what is he?" What proof has he given of any special relation to thee? Jesus answered this taunt with sublime patience and pity,

with distress at the resolute and judicial blindness they were fastening upon themselves: Ye neither know me, nor my Father if ye knew me, ye would know my Father also. Another stupendous utterance, implying the most intimate relation between his own personality and the Father's. Any fair or adequate knowledge of himself must reveal to them that he is in the Father and the Father in him; must bring forth to their consciences the overshadowing presence, the Divine glory. "You are wrapping yourself in impenetrable mists; you are refusing the light of life, and all the evidence given to you that I am the Light of the world. You do not see less recondite truths, nor perceive ideas far more elementary still; you cannot, in your spiritual blindness, apprehend the outline of my human character. If you had done this, you would have known my Father at least enough to prevent the utterance of so crude and disheartening a query. You know me not: why should I talk to you? All this ministry of mine has left me, so far as you Pharisees are concerned, perfectly unknown." There is a awful severity and unutterable pathos in these closing words of the discourse.

Vers. 20—30.—(3) *Further controversy with different groups, ending in partial admission of his claims by some.*

Ver. 20.—These words—an expression which emphasized the foregoing interview, and shut it off from the following context—spake he (Jesus!) in the treasury, as he taught in the temple-courts. The *ταροφυλακτον* (Mark xii. 41; Luke xx. 1) may be the chamber in which the thirteen chests, with trumpet-like orifices for the reception of alms, were erected. If so, it was in the "court of the women," or the place of public assembly most abundantly frequented by the multitude, and beyond which the women could not penetrate into the "court of the priests." Edersheim disputes Westcott's suggestion, that the *gazith*, or session-house of the Sanhedrin, was close by, and that the language of Jesus was within earshot of them. This chamber, *gazith*, was in the south-east corner of the "court of the priests," and therefore far away from the treasure-chamber. Supposing that the word *ταροφυλακτον* was the treasury itself, the *ἐν τῷ* may point to the neighbourhood of the sacred enclosure. The reference shows that the locality even of the discourse had made profound impression on one of the disciples, and implies great publicity

<sup>1</sup> There is very strong authority for the omission of *δ' ἱεροσολύμων*, with N, B, D, K, L, other ten uncials, and numerous versions. Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T. omit it

and imminent peril from these bold avowals. The clause added by the evangelist, And no man seized him, because his hour was not yet come, is a phrase repeated frequently, and one which delays, by a strange refrain, the tragic consummation (see Introduction, § VII. 5 (4)). Here it shows that some further attempt was made to lay violent hands on him, which for the moment failed. Seeing that avowals of his Divine nature wrought to a frenzy the passions of some of his hearers, and finally led to his condemnation for a capital offence, the evangelist again and again shows that the Lord—who made these claims on his trial, as given in the synoptists—had frequently reiterated them at peril of his life. The language of the high priest shows how bitterly the ecclesiastical authorities resented this assumption. The Fourth Gospel makes the synoptic account of this matter more intelligible by showing us that it was not an isolated occurrence.

Ver. 21.—This verse introduces a new scene and place, and perhaps a new day. The audience may have greatly changed, even if it had within it some of the same bewildered and exasperated enemies. Again he said, therefore. The *ὅν* refers to the fact that his liberty had not been infringed. The providence of God, the fear of the people, the inadequacy or confusing nature of the reports of his speech which had been taken to the authorities, had for a while arrested the tragedy. “No one laid hands on him.” In consequence of this circumstance he said unto them again (*i.e.* on a subsequent occasion), I go away, and ye shall seek me. So much he had said before to “the Jews,” adding, “Ye shall not find me” (ch. vii. 34). Thus also he spake, later on, to the disciples, adding, “Thither ye cannot come” (ch. xiii. 33). On all three occasions he was misunderstood. His departure was a mystery to the Jews, who thought, or at least said, that he, a pseudo-Messiah, might be contemplating a mission to the Greeks and to the Dispersion. His departure to the Father by a blood-stained pathway, by violent death, was unspeakably perplexing to his most intimate friends. The bare idea utterly conflicted with the current notion of the Christ; but it was in the last case (ch. xiv.) modified by the promise that, though he was about to leave them and to return to his Father, yet he would come again—they should once more behold him, and he would provide a place for them. Still, they would not be able for a while to follow him, even though willing to lay down their life for his sake (ch. xiii. 33, etc.). But in the face of a more bitter misunderstanding and an utter inability to perceive and know either him or the Father, Christ said not only, “Ye

shall seek me,” but ye shall die in your sin. The *ἐν* here indicates rather the condition in which they should die than the cause of their death. “In,” not “of” (so Hengstenberg, Meyer, and Luthardt). He did not say, “perish by reason of this sin,” but “die *in* this sin.” They will die looking vaguely, hopelessly, for the Saviour whom they have, in such an hyperbole of spiritual dullness and of bitter malice alike, misunderstood and rejected. They will pass through the gate of death with no deliverance from sin secured. Knowing neither the Father nor the eternal life and light manifested in himself, they will seek and not find, they will die unsanctified, unatoned, unreconciled. No gleam of light will play over the darkness of the grave. Whither I go, ye cannot come. The eternal home of the Father’s love will not open to such angry search. Such utter misunderstanding as they had evinced, such point-blank refusal to walk in his light, will impede and block the way to the heart of the Father, whose perfect revelation and sufficient pleading they steadily resist. The language of this verse is probably the condensation and conclusion of a much longer debate.

Ver. 22.—The Jews therefore said (were saying one to the other), Will he kill himself, that (because) he saith, Whither I go, thither ye cannot come? This query was one of harsh mockery, and can hardly be exaggerated in malign intent. The suicide was supposed to have his place in Gehenna. According to Josephus (*‘Bell. Jud.’* iii. 8, 5), “the darkest regions of Hades would receive the souls of such.” The Jews then scoff at his departure as a spontaneous resort to a fate towards which they did not care or mean to follow him. Edersheim declares this passage of Josephus not to be sustained by rabbinical authority, and he doubts this aspect of their scorn. He limits it to the Jewish guess that Jesus must be contemplating self murder, and as putting deliberately such a distance between them and him that they could not traverse it. The very fact that they had it in their hearts to destroy him makes it probable that they were looking beyond the act of suicide, either to the hell of popular belief or the hatred of contemporaries. They obviously thought that none but a suicide can determine the time of his departure. Christ proceeded to show them that the reason why his death would separate them from him was a fundamental difference of nature.

Ver. 23.—Yet this essential divergence is not based on fatalistic grounds, but on moral ones. The argument of the twenty-fourth verse explains the description of ver. 23. The ground of this utter alienation is the lack of belief, which will leave them in

their sins to die. He said to them, **Ye are from beneath; I am from above.** You spring from the lower as opposed to the higher world; you are influenced by considerations drawn from the earthly, sensual, superficial, and transitory. It is not necessary to suppose that our Lord is clenching the Jews' harsh speech about the underworld with a *tu-quoque*, as though they verily belonged to the Gehenna to which they were consigning him; for the next pair of clauses are in parallel apposition with the former. In the words, **Ye are of this world; I am not of this world,** "This world" corresponds with the *τῶν κέντρων* of the previous clause, and the "not of this world" corresponds with the *τὰ ἄνω*, the heavenly regions from which he has continually declared, in many varieties of phrase, that he had come, or descended, or been sent. Certainly and broadly speaking, this is true, as a contrast between Christ and all other men before their regeneration. Our Lord especially charges home upon these earth-bound souls, on these purely human, selfish, unspiritual, unrenewed, unbelieving men, this antagonism to himself, this refusal to walk in his light or receive his life. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (ch. iii. 6). They are flesh. He does not exclude them for ever from such participation in his own heavenly life as would reverse the descriptive and characteristic features of their being. The reason why they have not seen the kingdom or the King is that they are not born of the Spirit.

Ver. 24.—Therefore I said unto you, **Ye shall die in your sins; for if ye shall not have believed that I am (HE), ye will die in your sins.** This last clause, "for," etc., gives our Lord's reason in full for the terrific fact. It is a virtual reference of the unregenerate, earthly, low-born condition of his hearers to the fact of their unbelief in him. This fleshly, worldly state may be, might be, reversed by their faith in his essential character, an adequate moral surrender to his claims. Let them believe him to be that which he really is, the separation would then cease, and, like himself, they too might be "called out of the world." They might be "born of the Spirit," enter into the fellowship of the Son of God, become "not of this world," "even as he is not of this world." They might "arise, and go to their Father." There is no impassable chasm between them, though it is an appalling one to be crossed only by a faith which is itself the form and essence of regeneration. The faith is especially defined. Three times in this chapter our Lord represents the object of faith, the central focus of the Divine revelation, to be "I AM." The predicate is unexpressed here, and the same may be said in ver. 28

and ver. 58. Elsewhere the predicate may easily be gathered from the context (ch. ix. 9; xviii. 5, 6, 8; Mark xiii. 6; Luke xxi. 8). Meyer and many others have said, "The true predicate here is 'the Christ': 'I am the coming One,' 'the promised One,' 'the Sent of God.'" It is a somewhat dubious proceeding to draw the central idea of this chapter from an unexpressed ellipsis. The "I am" of these passages cannot be regarded as equivalent to the "I am that I am" of Exodus, or to the incommunicable name of the eternal One, but it is analogous to it. Throughout the prophets the unique and solitary grandeur of the Divine nature in its special covenant relations with Israel is expressed by the phrase, "I AM HE." This was the sum of the object of the Old Testament faith (Deut. xxxii. 39; Isa. xli. 13; xliii. 10, etc.). In like manner, the fulness of the Divine Ego in the incarnate Word is inexpressible by any one predicate. His entire revelation of himself had given this amplitude and indefinable breadth to his Personality. He had called himself the Son of God, the living Water, the veritable Bread, the Bread of God and of heaven, the Light of the world. He was indefinitely more than the current, popular idea of the Christ, immeasurably different from that which they persisted in expecting. Faith in that he is, in what he is, and in what he has revealed to them, is the germ of the life eternal. To refuse this faith is to refuse the hope that breaks over the gloom of *Shedh*, and to leave the full burden of sin upon the conscience. Compare St. Paul's words (1 Cor. xv. 17, 18), "If Christ be not risen, . . . ye are yet in your sins."

Ver. 25.—Then said they to him—the hostile Jerusalem party—in scornful mockery, *Σὺ τίς εἶ;* Who art thou? "Define thyself more closely; make thy claims clear and categorical. Give now a direct answer to a plain question." It is very remarkable that the Lord often refuses to respond in the precise form in which his interlocutors demand an answer. He sees the multitudinous sides of every truth, and frequently gives to his questioners the means of answering their question from the ground of deep spiritual conviction, rather than furnishes them with a formula which might easily be abused. *Who art thou?* How profoundly pathetic! How confirmatory of his own words, "Ye have not known me, nor my Father"! The reply which our Lord gave to the question has occasioned greater variety of interpretation than, perhaps, any other sentence in the Gospel. *Τῇ ἀρχῇ ὅτι (ὁ ὅτι) καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν.* The meaning of the words taken separately is disputable; the relation to the context has been very variously understood. (1) The sentence

may be taken interrogatively: *τὴν ἀρχὴν* regarded adverbially in the sense of "at all," and *ᾧ* in the sense of "why?" which is perhaps justified by Mark ix. 11, 28. So that it might mean, *Why do I even speak with you at all?* This is the interpretation of the ancient Greek Fathers, Cyril and Chrysostom; is preferred by Lücke ('Comm.,' ii. 301-313); and with slight modifications is adopted by Ewald (who gives it more the form of an exclamation, "How is it that I should have to speak to you at all!" [this rendering is put in the margin of R.T.]). Westcott and Moulton (see note to Winer, 'Grammar of New Testament,' pp. 581, 582), Matthai, and others. Meyer has differed somewhat in successive editions, but (4th edit.) translates, "What I from the beginning am also speaking to you (do ye ask)?" Can you still be asking concerning that which I have been from the beginning saying to you, viz. "Who I am?" This interpretation is singularly obscure. It turns on the fact that, except in some virtually negative sentences, *ἀρχὴν* cannot have the force of "at all," and falls back on the conclusion that it must, when used adverbially, have the force of "from the first." Lücke devotes great space to the proof from classical Greek that *ἀρχὴν* never means *ἄλως*, or *omnino*, except in association with a negative sentence, and he discusses the four exceptions to this supposed rule which some grammarians have discovered in secular Greek (Lennep, 'Ap. Phalarid.,' pp. 82, 55, and 92), and thereupon, in a different way from Meyer, endeavours to supply the negative conception. In reply to Meyer, it is fair to say that Christ had not been constantly announcing in categorical terms who he was and is; and further, that the rendering practically introduces a clause, "do ye ask," which is not in the text; moreover, its rendering transforms *λαλῶ* into *λεαλῆκα*. (2) Many have advocated an affirmative rendering. Augustine (with Lampe and Fritzschke) takes *τὴν ἀρχὴν* as the 'Αρχή of the universe, the *principium* (as Rev. xxi. 6), and translates, "Believe that I am the *Principium* (the Logos), because I am also speaking with you (because, humbled on your account, I have descended to such words as these)." Chrysostom and Nonnus (who turned the Gospel into Greek hexameters) associate the sentence with what follows; thus: "I, the 'Αρχή, who also speak to you, have many things to say and judge of you." The accusative form is thus set at nought. Calvin takes *τὴν ἀρχὴν* as equal to *ἐξ ἀρχῆς*, "from the beginning" (so that the meaning would be, "I did not arise suddenly, but as I was formerly promised, so now I come forth publicly"), "because I also speak with you." In other words

"What I now speak is in accordance with the conditions made in all ages 'from the beginning.'" So Delitzsch, Hebrew version of New Testament. Luthardt seems to approach this view, which he makes more difficult by insisting that *τὴν ἀρχὴν* does not mean "from" but "at the beginning." The view of Winer, Grimm, Alford, Stier, Godet, Thoma, and Plummer, is substantially the same, giving to *τὴν ἀρχὴν* the sense of *omnino*. Essentially, *wholly, altogether* (I am) that which even I am saying to you. The grammatical objection that this use of *τὴν ἀρχὴν* demands a negative sentence in classic Greek, is not conclusive. This is the only place in the New Testament where the word is used adverbially, and it is in reply to a mocking question which has much virtual negative in it. Green ('Critical Notes') urges that the sense of "altogether" (*omnino*) was preserved in all kinds of sentences without distinction. He does not prove it, but it is entirely probable that it might have this force in New Testament Greek. The great advantage of the rendering is that it brings the answer into relation with the entire previous discourse, in which Christ's testimony to himself had been disputed because (in the opinion of those who were debating with him) that testimony had not been adequately supported. "I am the Revelation of the Father, the Messenger from heaven, the Bread of God, the Light of the world—essentially that which I am saying to you." Believe my own testimony thus far, and that will answer the query, "Who art thou?" There is no great distinction between this view and that of De Wette: "Von vorne herein (vor allen Dingen) bin ich was ich auch zu euch rede," as Brückner put it—"From the beginning, from the first, (I am) what I am also saying to you." Winer's view seems to me the best. Grimm thus translates: "Omnino, hoc est sine ulla exceptione sum, quod etiam vobis eloquor, non solum sum, sed etiam vobis, prædico id quod sum."

Ver. 26.—I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you. Hitherto, when the Lord uttered his great words of self-revelation, which always had an ethical end and were meant for the advantage of his hearers, they interrupted his speech and disputed his claims. They refused those testimonies to himself which, if true, would necessitate their instantaneous submission. He seems to have gathered all his self-witness together in the word, "I am," verily altogether, absolutely, from the beginning onwards, just what my words convey; but I have much more to say concerning you, even if I should have nothing more to say concerning myself. The testimonies and the judgments may be profoundly distasteful to

you, but I dare not therefore withhold them. I am come to deliver them at any cost to myself or you. But he that sent me is true, whether you hear or forbear; and I am his Mouthpiece, so the truth has to be told. The thought of God, if we can only approach it, is the absolute truth about every thing and about every man. Jesus is the Word of God incarnate, and the Utterer of irreversible judgment. The things which I heard from him, these speak I into the world. *Eis tōn κόσμον* is a remarkable expression. "Speak *into*, so that the words may reach as far as and spread through the world" (Westcott). The expression seems to have left him *above* or *outside* the world, so that he appears as "the Mediator between two worlds."

Ver. 27.—They understood (perceived) not that he spake to them of the Father. This difficult parenthesis of the evangelist calls attention to the fact that, during the immediately preceding discourse and controversy, Jesus had dropped his references to the Father, and had used the periphrasis, "he that sent me," probably suggesting to this strangely excited populace, fed with weird fancies and wild expectations, that the mysterious Being with whom they were conversing was but the Delegate of One mightier than he, who was hidden in the secret place of God's providence until the hour of his own manifestation should appear to have struck. They might have remembered the utter deference which the great prophet John had displayed before a Messiah whom as yet they knew not. They may have heard that even John himself, at a later date, sent from the prison two of his disciples to propound the query, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" in other words, "Art thou the final Manifestation of all that I have predicted and believed? or is *another* to make his appearance with fire and axe and available force to compel obedience and to secure universal homage?" It is more than probable that the evangelist, being personally alive to the cross-currents of passion, enthusiasm, and hostility which were at work in the hearts of the populace, saw by the very blankness and confusion on their faces, and the "asides" of the multitude, that they had not perceived that Jesus was throughout in these references speaking of the *Father of all*—the supreme Source of all power, the Lord of hosts. Even when he had said, "Ye have not known me, nor my Father," they had not risen to such a conception of the Lord's meaning as to suppose that the supreme Father himself was being suggested to them and cited as the corroborative Witness, as the supernatural Aid and Divine Presence which was giving validity to all that Christ has said about himself. Their ignorance

and lack of perception need not astonish us when we reflect upon the obscurity and non-receptivity of the apostles themselves, and the like obtuseness of theologians and cultivated men of the world in every age from that day to this. The remark is, moreover, added doubtless to interpret the following verses, in which the ideas of ver. 26 are repeated, with the difference that, whereas he had already spoken of him that sent him, and who had authorized his words and judgments, Jesus now gives to him the beloved name of "the Father."

Ver. 28.—But when Jesus turns to them again he calls special attention to the main source of their continuous misconception and rejection. Not only is he "the Son," and "the Son of God," but indubitably he is also "the Son of man." He has come down from heaven and is before them as a Man among men—"one Jesus." He has taken upon himself the form of a slave, the fashion of man. That the manifestation of the Divine should be perfectly realized in the human, though a fundamental truth lying at the heart of all revelation, is nevertheless *not* the alphabet of Divine teaching; nay, it is the very highest and most recondite of all truths. This humbled humanity of the incarnate Logos led on to other issues of enormous significance. The eternal Son in the form of God would become, as "Son of man," obedient unto death. The highest revelation of the Son of God, and therefore of the Father, would be effected by the surrender of that mysterious life of his for the world's behoof. The previous announcements of this truth, which we now see to be the very crown and culmination of the gospel, had greatly offended his hearers of all kinds, and on distinct grounds. In the words that follow a touch of deeper meaning than any which had preceded is supplied when he proceeds to associate this death of the Son of man with the wilful act of the ecclesiastical authorities in Jerusalem. Jesus therefore said (*unto them*<sup>1</sup>), When ye shall have lifted up the Son of man (compare here notes on ch. iii. 14; vi. 62; xii. 32). The word *ὑψώω* is used with the twofold sense of exaltation on the cross—"signifying by what death he should glorify God"—and also of the issues of that lifting up by means of the tree of ignoble torment and mortal agony to the throne of glory. The twofold meaning of the word cannot be excluded here.<sup>2</sup> Then ye shall come to

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf and R.T. omit *αὐτοῖς*, with B, L, T, on the ground that *αὐ* and *D* have other and different additions.

<sup>2</sup> Edersheim cites, from 'Pesikta R.,' 10, proof that the Hebrew word *שָׁבַע* occurs (as in Gen. xl. 19, 13) in the same twofold

know—then the process of proof will be completed—that I am (he)—that I am that which fundamentally I am declaring to you, that my testimonies have unique but trenchant confirmation!—and that I am doing nothing from myself, but that even as the Father taught me, (so) these things I speak. The “he that sent me” (ver. 26), is here replaced by “the Father.” “The things which I heard from (παρὰ) him” is replaced by “even as the Father taught me,” and the ταῦτα λαλῶ are repeated. “The cross and the crown” will be the proof to the most obtuse and bigoted “that I am that which I say I am.” The forecast is here given of the conversion of his murderers, the overwhelming effects produced by the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus, and the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 36; iv. 4; vi. 7; Rom. xi. 11). Bengel: “Cognoscetis ex re, quod nunc ex verbo non creditis.”

Ver. 29.—And he that sent me—of whom I now plainly speak to you as “the Father”—is with me. He is not in some inaccessible region of indifference to my mission or my word, but *with me*. He encompasses the Son of man, finds willing, unswerving response to his will in my words. He sent me, and commissioned me to undertake this work. He is affirming in his own way all my message, and corroborating my testimony. You have asked, “Where is thy Father?” and I now tell you, “He is with me.” He (the Father?) hath not left me at any moment of my career alone. He has confirmed and sustained my word, and upheld my life; and you can see the signs of this abiding communion: Because (i.e. Christ does not account for the abiding companionship by the fact of his own obedience, but refers to the reasons which his hearers might find for his great assertion; cf. Luke vii. 47) I do always the things that are pleasing to him. I do this because he has never left me to my mere human nature. This self-consciousness of Christ is one of

sense of “exalting” and “executing.” Moreover, he remarks that *Tala* (τάλα) means also to “lift up” and to “crucify.” The Jewish expression *Taluj*, for Christ, would confirm this usage (cf. Bleek, ‘Beitrage zur Evangelienkritik,’ p. 231; Grimm, *s.v.*, etc.).<sup>1</sup> The “comma” here is preferred by the R.T. to the “period,” and the second clause made also the object of the verb γινώσκεσθε after ὅτι: so Meyer.

<sup>2</sup> Ὁ Πατήρ is omitted by Griesbach, Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, and R.T., on the authority of N<sup>c</sup>, B, D, L, T, X, and important cursives, versions, Vulgate and Coptic, and quotations.

the loftiest and most entirely unique phenomena recorded in history. This absolute confidence with reference to his whole course lifts our Lord to a pinnacle of the loftiest elevation. He declares himself absolutely free from sin, and even in thought or deed to have left undone nothing that seemed good to the Father. If such an utterance had not flashed the conviction of his Divine nature upon some of his hearers, it is impossible to conceive what would or could have done so.

Ver. 30.—As he spake these words, many believed on him. This is another interjected comment or connecting link supplied by the evangelist, revealing intimate knowledge of the state of feeling and changeful emotions of the people. Another hint of the eye-witness and ear-witness of this memorable scene; and, supposing that we read here a correct transcript of words that proceeded from his lips, we can do no other than cry with Thomas, “My Lord, and my God!” The remark is intercalated, as though St. John wished to emphasize the accuracy with which he had reported, on this occasion, the very words of his Lord, conveying their ambiguous phrase, and asserting in fresh form what had convinced St. John, on subsequent reflection, that he was what he said. The phrase, πιστεῦεν εἰς, to believe *in* or *on* a person, is to close with him, to accept all the collateral consequences of such trust, to be content to wait for fuller explanation, to cast self upon the object of faith, and allow the object of such trust to bear all the responsibility of the act. It is the form most frequently adopted by St. John (ch. ii. 11; iii. 16, 18, 36; iv. 39, and many other places; cf. ch. xiv. 1, 12; xvii. 20); only once in the synoptic narrative (Matt. xviii. 6 with Mark ix. 42). The form πιστεῦεν ἐπὶ occurs occasionally with the accusative (1 John iii. 23, and frequently in the Acts); and πιστεῦεν ἐπὶ with the dative, also πιστεῦεν ἐν, are used, implying even a closer and more intimate communion still with the Object of faith (see ch. xvi. 30). With these forms must be compared the more common one with the simple dative, πιστεῦεν τινί, which occurs in vers. 31, 45, and ch. xiv. 11, etc., which implies acceptance of the saying, promise, or fact there propounded, and falls short of the moral surrender involved in the fuller form. John here asserts that *many* of his hearers, those who had hitherto refrained from full acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God, yielded to his claims there and then. This faith on the part of “some” is almost more wonderful than the unbelief of others. The difficulties in their way were appalling in comparison with the perplexities which beset our minds. The Lord appealed to his own inner consciousness, to



his supernatural aid in speech, to the spotless, sinless character of his hidden life. It was remarkable that any strangers or enemies should have surrendered themselves to them. The event shows that the surrender could not stand the test.

Vers. 31—59 describe a further conversation, not with the same audience. The words record a vivid conflict between the Lord and the Jews who believed him, who accepted the Messianic claims, but persisted in interpreting them, not by his word, but by their own ideas of the theocratic kingdom, by their privileges as children of Abraham, by their national animosity to their nearest neighbours the Samaritans, by their inability to press behind the veil of his humanity to his Divine nature. Their faith was of the most imperfect kind; but such as it was, it was made manifest to the observation of the apostle, and this throws light upon the fact that, among the many who believed on him, or rather alongside of these, there was a certain section of "the Jews," of the chief rulers and rabbis, who made a definite movement towards him. This doubtless excited the intense enthusiasm of the disciples, who might at once hope and almost expect that Jesus would with open arms accept their homage. But he at once puts this faith of theirs—perhaps ignorantly expressed—to a proof absolutely necessary for the salvation of his hearers.

Vers. 31, 32.—(4) *The test Christ supplied to those who admitted his testimony—true discipleship and freedom.* Jesus therefore said to the Jews who had believed him—or, had become believing, and were now waiting for some special sign that their belief of his words was to be immediately rewarded by some closer conformity between his next step and their own prepossessions—If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples. Short of making the word of Jesus the resting-place for both heart and intellect, full discipleship would be impossible. The true disciple receives and continues in the word of his Master. The expression expands and illustrates the difference between believing Christ to speak the truth, and believing in him. Many ancient Jews and modern Christians believe so much of Christ's word as is verified by their moral consciousness, and dispute or dispose of the rest as *Aberglaube*. The genuine disciple continues, abides, in the word of him who is the incarnate Word, yielding to it entire acquiescence, as the absolute reality of

things, as the truth about God and man. He adds, And ye shall come fully to know the truth; *i.e.* to realize in the very depths of your being the trustworthy character of my word. "The Truth" (see ch. xiv. 6) is one of the distinguishing names which Jesus takes to himself. He is *the Truth*, and "full of grace and truth." So far this statement corresponds with ch. vii. 16, 17. The "Jews" who had believed him would not feel the fiery ordeal and touch of flame applied to the sensitive skin of their pride and self-importance; but when he added, And the truth shall emancipate you, the case was altered. Truth only can set the mind free from its bondage under ignorance and prejudice and evil habit. If the Light of the world shines into the dark places of the heart, the chains erewhile misunderstood will not only become visible, but will be broken. Godet beautifully says that "the empire of sin in a human heart is based upon an illusion, a fascination. Let truth shine, and the spell is broken, the will is disgusted with that which seduced it—the bird escapes from the net of the fowler." But this proffer of freedom to his disciples by continuing in his word was too startling a suggestion for their nascent and imperfect faith. He had told them that without faith in him they would die in their sins (ver. 24); now he assures them that, unless they abide steadfastly in his word, they will not escape from a bondage manifest enough to his eye, if not to theirs. This brings from them an angry response.

Vers. 33—46.—(5) *The offer of spiritual freedom to the seed of Abraham provoked bitter hostility and misapprehension.*

Ver. 33.—They answered him, We be Abraham's seed—taking the highest position of national grandeur and racial pride. Vast were the pretensions which the Jews often assumed from this lofty ancestry. "They were all children of kings;" "Solomon's feast was not too good for them;" "He was heir of the world;" "They were the inheritors in him of all the nations." They had rung this cry into the ears of John the Baptist, when this last prophet had called upon them for repentance. Their following boast is difficult to understand: We have never yet been enslaved to any one; and great difference of opinion has prevailed over the meaning of these words. It is incredible that John should represent the Jews as ignorant of their national political history. The first word of their Decalogue included a reference to the "house of bondage" from which Jehovah had delivered the seed of Abraham. Moreover, their political humiliation at the hand of the border kingdoms of Assyria, Babylon, and Syria was the perpetual theme of prophet and psalmist.

The terrible reverses that they had subsequently experienced at the hand of Antiochus and of the Roman power, and the galling submission to Rome which at the moment was rousing their fiercest passion, would render any such boast simply preposterous. Godet's suggestion, that they were making a boast of their personal civil freedom, that Abraham's seed were not sold into positive slavery, however mortifying their political servitude had proved, is far-fetched and too far away from the facts of the case; neither does it harmonize with the character of this angry retort. Probably a reference is made to the ideal freedom from slavery and from dependence which they had, in their hour of deepest depression from all and every form of tyranny whatsoever, religiously maintained. They did, as their wonderful psalter shows, cherish a conviction that David's throne and Abraham's inheritance ideally stood through all the ages, lustrous and magnificent to the eye of faith. When the holy and beautiful house was burned with fire, when their exile was complete, they still saw all visible things, even "heaven and earth," departing or rolled up like a scroll, while their Creator and redeeming King was seated still on his eternal throne. From St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, they clearly held that the mere possession of the Law, whether they kept it or not, was their much-prized pledge of independence from all other authority or servitude. If so, they may have been on this occasion boasting of their ideal freedom in virtue of their hereditary privileges, and forgetful of the lessons even of the agelong story of Ishmael and Esau, and the deportation and abolition of Israel as a nation. One can scarcely refrain a momentary thrill of admiration at the hardihood of their eager faith, and the overwhelming strength of confidence they manifested in their destiny as a people. All the spiritual salvation and ideal freedom which they desired they possessed as children of Abraham. How sayest thou—"Upon what possible principle dost thou promise to us that which we already are proud of possessing, viz. glorious liberty?" Is it from the emancipating power of truth? We have the truth; we are the depositaries of infallible truth. We already possess as our birthright what thou art offering to us as the full result of discipleship. How sayest thou, *Ye shall be made free?*

Ver. 34.—Jesus answered them; <sup>1</sup> i.e.

<sup>1</sup> Thoma sees here the doctrine of Paul on spiritual freedom, and his allegorical use of the story of Sarah and Hagar in the Epistle to the Galatians. He finds a reflection of the controversy between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. It is

those "Jews who believed him," but whose retort showed their faith to be of the most feeble and imperfect kind, and which, if it were momentarily assumed, was ready to disappear at the first touch of trial. A promise of Divine love had been treated by them as an insult, not so much to their national history, as to their religious triumph over their civil and political disasters. There is no reason to believe that in these, or in the following words, the *unbelieving* Jews had once more become the interlocutors, as Tholuck and Hengstenberg have done on different grounds. Meyer, Ellicott, Lange, and many others agree with the view here advanced. The answer to them (*αὐτοῖς*, those who were the subjects of *ἀπεκρίθησαν*) is introduced with peculiar solemnity: Verily, verily I say unto you, every one (*πᾶς*) that doeth sin—*ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν* is different from *πράσσειν φαῦλα* of ch. iii. 20; it is the precise opposite of *ποιῶν ἀλήθειαν* of ch. iii. 21, and does not mean "every one who committeth separate acts of transgression," but it means "every one who is living a life of sin"—is the bond-slave (of sin). Godet is strongly disposed, on the ground of the exceedingly small authority of D and b alone (and certain quotations of Origen), to believe that the *τῆς ἁμαρτίας* is a gloss. Certainly the whole passage would be easier to interpret if our Lord had simply said that the man under the habitual power of sin is a slave, and had then, in vers. 35 and 36, advanced to the contrast between the slave and the Son. But there is great unanimity among all the authorities as to the accuracy of the Received and Revised Texts, though Westcott and Hort place it in brackets. The interpretation, consequently, is simply this, that Christ did "pass from the idea of bondage under sin to that of bondage generally, and from the idea of sonship to the Son" (Westcott). The notion of personal transgression producing a bondage, and enfettering the soul and the will, and separating it from the glorious liberty of true sonship, lay outside of their notion of discipleship. They were not requiring deliverance from sin or its bondage; what they wanted was the full realization of the national hope. The language of this verse can be paralleled from the writings of the classics and rabbis,<sup>1</sup> and is largely

astonishing that so acute a critic does not see that we have here the original principle, which was variously developed by St. Paul in his lifelong controversy.

<sup>1</sup> Wünsche quotes 'Succa,' fol. 52, a: "Rabbi Asi said that evil conduct is compared at its beginning to a spider's web, and afterwards to a cart-rope (Isa. v. 18); and shows that seven names given to the sinner by the Old Testament writers, reach their

handled by St. Paul (Rom. vi. and vii.). The relation between sin as a principle and sins as acts of the will is a great New Testament revelation. The personal commission of sin augments the force of the corrupt tendency which leads to and facilitates fresh transgression. Every compliance with evil forges a new fetter, and imposes it on the will of the transgressor. "The strong man guards his house, and his goods are in peace" (Luke xi. 21).

Ver. 35.—This being the fact as to sin and its servitude, the Lord proceeds to deal with servitude in God's house. Servitude and its spirit are manifested in the house of the Father. The bond-slave abideth not in the house for ever. So long as he is a bond-slave and not emancipated from the fetters of mere race, so long as he is ruled by the servile spirit, there is no perpetuity about his relation to the Father. He can be sold away (Gen. xxi. 10; Gal. iv. 30). An involuntary subject of the Law, who belongs to the theocracy as a slave merely, and because he cannot help himself, and occupies a position which a slave does in the family of sin, has lost all freedom and spontaneity in his service, and will find himself cast out at last. But the son abideth for ever. Sonship is the only principle on which *continuance* in the house can be secured. It has been much debated whether the *ὁ υἱός* of the thirty-fifth verse goes beyond the idea of sonship, the generic antithesis to the idea of slave. Certainly this seems the primary reference. In the following verse, *the Son*, in his loftiest functions, and as identifying himself with "the truth" of ver. 32, entirely fulfils the conception of "Sonship" and eternal abiding in the Father's house, and therefore is entrusted with the power of emancipating all slaves, of adopting sons into the Father's royal house. Thus we may suppose that the first use of the term "son," though laying special emphasis on the spirit and conditions of sonship, yet points to him who entirely embodies, enshrines, and has from before all worlds realized the Divine idea of Son—the only begotten Son—in the bosom of the Father.

Ver. 36.—Therefore if the Son—who abideth ever in the Father's bosom, and fills the house with his glory, and is the Heir of all things—make you free, ye shall be free indeed (*ἐντως*, "essentially," only here used by St. John, who elsewhere uses the word *ἀληθώς*, ver. 31; ch. i. 48; iv. 42; vii. 40; vi. 14). The Son is he who gives power to become the sons of God. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). Only

strong expression in that of a slave (Prov. xxix. 21)."

by acquiring the true spirit and regenerated life of a son can any man be delivered from the bondage induced by ignorance of the actual truth about God, about man, and about the relation between God and man. This knowledge is produced by the Son of God, who is the Truth. A full and believing apprehension of the Son of God, a realization of what he is, confers a new life and reveals the wonderful possibilities and relations of human nature. The incarnation of the Son of God as a veritable Son of man emancipates the soul fettered by the tyranny of nature and baffled by the mastery of time and sense, inasmuch as it discloses the august majesty of its own origin. Essential freedom accrues to him who knows that sin is pardoned, that death is vanquished, that the prince of this world is cast out. The eager Jew might look through the battered walls of Zion and the charred fragments of its gorgeous temple, and still see the adamantine structure and its agelong triumph. But the disciples of Jesus, with John as their leader, when these words were recorded by him as they fell from the Lord in their true connection, saw the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, with its open gates, its crystal stream, and the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb as the Light of it. The freedom of a perfect service and the glorious liberty of the sons of God was theirs, in proportion as they accepted their emancipation from the Son himself (1 Cor. vii. 22; Rom. viii. 35, 36; 2 Cor. iii. 18). The sons are "free indeed," whatever the world, or the Hebrew Christians, or the philosophers might think or say.

Ver. 37.—I know (*οἶδα*, I know absolutely, I do not come to know it from your report) that ye are the seed of Abraham. They belonged to the noble race, "whose are the fathers;" they were the *σπέρμα* of him who received the promises. Christ admitted the pedigree, but he proceeds to show that mere hereditary descent would be of no avail to them apart from moral considerations. These ideas, these revolutionary conceptions, so far as Judaism was concerned, were not the evolution of Christian ideas in the second century. It is most instructive to see how clearly St. Paul had already grasped them, and woven them into a powerful argument when dealing with the Judaizers in Galatia, many years before this Gospel was written (see the entire argument of Gal. iii., which thus rests on the teaching of the Christ himself). But ye seek to kill me. This charge is certainly difficult to suppose applicable to those who "had come to believe in him" (ver. 31). One of three suppositions must be made—either (1) the believing Jews were surrounded by angry groups of his bitter enemies, to whom he here addressed himself;

or (2) the Lord spoke here to them as representing the large company of Jerusalem opponents, whom he knew at that moment to be planning his death, and as all orators and debaters are in the habit of dealing with opposing arguments by showing the character they assume in others, who make them their boast; or (3) those who had come to believe him up to a certain point had as rapidly relapsed, at the first touch of spiritual proof, into disbelief and cruel hostility. This seems the more natural interpretation of the fact, which may, at the same time, have become patent from some angry manifestation of his implacable foes. There is much to be found in the background and scenery of this dramatic colloquy, reported with such extreme brevity, which would, if we exactly knew how to paint it, solve its difficulties. Ye seek to slay me, because my word—the word which is mine—makes no progress—or, *advance*—in you. *Χαρέω* has both transitive and intransitive meanings; thus it means “leave,” “depart,” “turn,” or “come to,” with *eis* (2 Pet. iii. 9, “contain;” ch. ii. 6; xxi. 25; Mark ii. 2); but it has the force frequently in Plato “to make progress or advance,” and it has this force here. So Meyer, Westcott, R.T., etc. (Luthardt and Tholuck suggest “find entrance,” which would require *eis* rather than *en*). Not only did they not *continue* in Christ’s word (ver. 31), but the word itself made no way in their minds; it was barred out by prejudices, and thus choked at its very first working. Christ thus represents his word first as the very atmosphere and home in which his true disciples abide, and then as a powerful influence which grows evermore in power and command as it is pondered. It means more and more to those who abide in it; it implicitly contains a whole universe of truth and reality, of impulse and motive, for those who allow to it “free course”—who are of the truth, and hear his voice.

Ver. 38.—I speak the things<sup>1</sup> which I have seen with the (my) Father:<sup>2</sup> and do you

<sup>1</sup> The authorities are balanced between *ἐγὼ* and *ἐγὼ δέ*. The former is read by N, B, C, D, L, X; by important cursives, 69, 131, and quotations from Origen, Chrysostom, and Cyril; and adopted by Tregelles, Alford, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Westcott and Hort, R.T., Lachmann, and Meyer. The *δ* is read by E, F, G, K, and others, by Godet, Lange, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The *μου* is omitted by B, U, L, T, X, by some versions, by Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Lachmann, R.T., Westcott and Hort, and Godet, though sustained by N, D, Γ, Δ, Λ, and other uncials and versions. Both the *μου* and *ἐμὸν* seem as though they were

therefore the things which ye heard<sup>1</sup> from the<sup>2</sup> (your) father; or, *and you therefore do the things which ye heard from your father*. We need not, with Meyer, limit the Lord’s vision of the Divine things which he saw with the Father to his premundane Personality. He describes himself in constant communion with the Father. The Father is with him. He knows the mind and will and good pleasure of the Father. His is the perfectly pure heart, which is as an eye for evermore beholding the Father. That the Only Begotten sees and knows what no other sees, is constantly taught in this Gospel (see ch. iii. 32; vi. 46). In Christ, moreover, the disciple may verily see the Father (ch. xiv. 7, 9; 1 John ii. 23). The probable textual reading given above would draw a species of contrast between Christ’s “seeing” (*παρὰ τῶ*) with the Father, and the Jews’ “hearing” (*παρὰ τοῦ*) from the Father, as though such communication were less intimate than “seeing.” This must not be pressed (see ver. 40). If the *ποιεῖτε* be imperative, the language would be an appeal to the Jews to act out that which, from prophets and teachers and interpreters of the Divine will, they had heard. Moulton treats the clause as one more, one last, exhortation. The word of Christ had not advanced within them—it remained as a barren formula; let them give it free course now. Their opposition had not as yet been malignant or hopeless; one more chance is given them. The more ordinary interpretation is to make the *ποιεῖτε* indicative. If it be so, and still more if the *ἐμὸν* (omitted by B, L, P) be genuine, “the father” to whom reference is made as theirs, is in contrast with the Father of Christ, and, without pointedly saying so, Jesus implies that it is another father altogether. In ver. 44 Christ does indeed declare that the father with whom they are in ethical relation and sympathy is not God, but the devil—the very opposite of the God of Abraham, the very antithesis of the Father of infinite love. At this point

introduced to emphasize the contrast, and are omitted together by modern editors. R.T. has introduced the words in italics.

<sup>1</sup> *ἤκούσατε* rests on N, B, C, K, L, X, 1, 13, 33, 69, and others, and a comment of Origen, which discusses the contrast between *ἤκούσατε* and *ἐώρακα*. It is adopted by Lachmann, Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Godet, R.T., and Westcott and Hort. The T.R. reads *ἐώρακατε*, with N\*, E, F, G, H, M, and many other uncials; and Lange and others see no reason to change it from the nature of the case, for “hearing” and “seeing” are subsequently interchanged in their application.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2 in preceding column.

he simply suggests, "Therefore the things which ye heard from your father ye do," ye habitually do, ye are now doing in your hatred and murderous sentiments towards myself. Surely this implies a severity which is hardly compatible with an address to Jews who believed him. The interpretation of the following verse is governed by that of this.

Ver. 39.—They answered and said. If the second interpretation be accepted, then, irritated by the suggestion that "the Father" whose properties and claims he saw and revealed to them was different from "the father" whose nature and ways they "heard" and practised, and counting, moreover, on the concession of the fact that they were Abraham's "seed," they cried, Our father is Abraham; we are spiritually, ethically, related to him, and if we are doing that which we have heard from our father, then we can claim that all we are doing is along the lines of our Abrahamic dignity. But if ver. 38 be regarded as a final expostulation, according to the first of the interpretations of ποιεῖτε, then the Jews merely disclosed their determination to misapprehend the plain words of the Divine Lord, and when he was reminding them of the Father, of their Father, they at once stood back upon their hereditary pride, and declared that they were doing the works of their great ancestor. Jesus saith to them, If ye are<sup>1</sup> Abraham's children, as you say—for the position of "children" is involved in the idea and claim of spiritual Fatherhood which ye boast—then, with such spiritual and ethical relations as these, ye would do the works of Abraham—works of faith; you would be open to the access of spiritual revelations with childlike simplicity; you would have accepted the heavenly voice; you would have known whence it came; you would have resembled him in his moral sensitiveness, in his gentle loving-kindness, in his victorious faith; but—

Ver. 40.—But now, as things are, ye are seeking—plotting, contriving, in subtle ways and by false charges—to kill me. The entire discourse is made more obvious by our Lord's discovery of the plot of the last few days, and by his allowing his friends and opponents to know that he had penetrated the thin, subtle disguise under which this murderous plan was veiled. The ex-

citement produced by this bold charge among his own true disciples, and those who now for the first time heard of it, by our Lord's then and there lifting the veil from many a specious question; the look of guilt on the countenances of some, of truculent admission of the charge in the gesture of others; the loud murmurs and confused cries of the crowd,—must all be realized to apprehend the tremendous crisis which had now arrived. He aggravated the charge by describing himself as a man who hath declared to you the truth which I heard from God. This is the only place where the Lord speaks of himself as "a man" (cf. Acts xvii. 31; 1 Tim. ii. 5). He here describes himself as One who is subject and liable to their murderous passion—a man, seeing that his eternal Personality has been presented to his antagonists in the form of man. His manhood was the link of relation between the God who sent him, taught him, surrounded and enveloped him, and the consciousness of his hearers. This is the highest representation of the very conception of a Divine commission and a Divine message. They were seeking to stamp out a Divine fire, to drown a heavenly voice, to refuse and trample upon a sacred Messenger. This did not Abraham. The father of the faithful was susceptible to the heavenly voice. He heard and obeyed the voice of Jehovah with childlike docility (Gen. xii., xiv., xviii., xxii.). The visions, the commands, the messengers, the manifestations, of God to Abraham were so readily accepted that his faith is a proverb, and his greatest name is "friend of God." The wilful, hurried, malicious treatment of both the Divine Messenger and the sacred message, both of which Jesus declared to have come directly from God, proves the lack of relation with the Life of Abraham. They might be Abraham's "seed" (σπέρμα) but not his (τέκνα) children, and he in this sense could not be their "father."

Ver. 41.—Instead of doing the works of Abraham, you are doing the works of your father. That is, you have a father with whom you are, nevertheless, in living, ethical relation. If you persist in boasting of your father, who is neither "the Father" nor Abraham, I must soon tell you who that father is. Loud interruption followed. Abrupt and startling was the retort: We are<sup>1</sup> [were] not born of fornication; we have one Father, God. Many expositors think

<sup>1</sup> N, B, D, L, T, Origen (ten times), and Augustine justify the more difficult reading ἐστε instead of ἦτε of T.R. and the other authorities. So Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th edit.), R.T., and Meyer. Ἐποικεῖτε stands without ἂν, on still stronger authority, though transferred to the margin by Westcott and Hort.

<sup>1</sup> Οὐ γυναικόμεθα is accepted, with T.R., by Tischendorf (8th edit.) and Luthardt, on the authority of N, C, D, X, I, Δ, and other uncials and all the cursives; οὐκ ἐγεννήθημεν is preferred by Lachmann, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and R.T., with B, D.

that these Jews began to babble against the possibility of their being bastard children of Sarah, or to protest that they were not Ishmaelites or any collateral branch of the seed of Abraham, like the Idumæans or the sons of Keturah. This is far away from the context, and unworthy of the controversy. The idea is sufficiently explained by the second clause. The covenant relation between Jehovah and Israel is so constantly referred to in the Old Testament (Hos. i. 2; ii. 4; Isa. i. 21; Jer. ii. 20) under the image of marriage and the unfaithfulness of particular generations to Jehovah; and their false worship and idolatry are so often regarded as "fornication" and "adultery" from God, the Husband of the dedicated spouse, so that nothing is more probable, when Jesus charged them with doing the works of their father, that they should have exclaimed, "Surely we have no idolatrous sympathies. None but Jehovah is our God. Thou must not charge us with any compromise with the accursed thing." The wild rage which the Jews had shown to Pilate in the matter of the shields, their abhorrence of the defilement of idols in the matter of food, their avoidance even of the supreme court of Roman justice under fear of idolatrous contamination, explain the outflash of this indignant rejoinder. This view is, in the main, advocated by De Wette, Lampe, Lücke, Lange, and Hengstenberg; but opposed by Meyer. Westcott: "We do not owe our position to idolatrous desertion of Jehovah. We are the offspring of the union of God with his chosen people. Our spiritual descent is as pure as our historical descent." Godet modifies it: "We have no idolatrous blood in our veins; we are Hebrews of the Hebrews." They claim to be the children of God, as well as children of Abraham (Deut. xxxii. 6; Isa. lxi. 16; Mal. ii. 10).

Ver. 42.—But Jesus will not allow them to claim the full privilege of sons of God. Said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would be loving me, not seeking to slay me. Seeing that you do not love me, God is not your Father in the sense in which you are boasting such relation to him. The reason is: For I came forth out (ἐκ) of God. This expression only occurs in one other passage (ch. xvi. 28), and there the texts vary between ἐκ, ἀπὸ, and παρὰ. It points to the momentous and unique fact of his incarnation, as the projection from the very essence of God involved in the essence of his being. The Father is the eternal Source of Christ's Divine nature. There are two other forms of expression used by our Lord. In ch. xiii. 3 and xvi. 30 ἐξελεθεῖν ἀπὸ is adopted, which describes rather the act of the incarnate One; and in ch. xvi. 27 and xvii. 8 ἐξελεθεῖν παρὰ,

whereby is suggested the procession of Christ into the condition of fellowship with the eternal Father or that of being πρὸς τὸν Θεόν or εἰς τὸν κόλπον. By ἐξελεθεῖν ἐκ he implies an even sublimer conception of the pre-natal glory, and that, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, "he was the Effulgence of his glory, and the express Image of his substance." And I am come. I am here face to face with you. Meyer and others would make both verbs depend on ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ: but if we are right in the special meaning of the preposition, the force of it would be lost in the second clause. The ἐξῆλθον refers to his eternal procession from the very nature of God, and special indication of it when he took our human nature up into his own; and the ἦκα refers to his presence and appearance in their midst as a "Man who told them the truth." For neither have I come. The perfect tense here is used in contrast to the present ἦκα, to show that he has the whole past of his career as a divinely sent Messenger present in his consciousness. And he establishes the fact that he has proceeded from God by the dismissal of every other alternative. I have not come from myself, as an act of self-determination; I have not come to do my own will, but the Father's. I have not come on any self-chosen, self-honouring path, with motives of self-interest; but in strict obedience to the Father's injunction—he sent me. You would have loved me, not hated me, you would have trusted me and rejoiced in me, and not sought to kill me, if God were your Father; for you would then have felt all through my career that that One Father, of whom you boast an intimate knowledge, was revealing himself as One near to you, close to you, in the bare fact of my presence among you.

Ver. 43.—Why do ye not understand—come to appreciate and penetrate the significance of—my speech? There is delicate subtle distinction between λαλιὰ and λόγος, corresponding to that between λαλέω and λέγω. The former word connotes the form, manner, and tone of utterance, and the latter its inner substance and power. Λαλιὰ is a word used for any manifestation of sound, a voice, the babble of children, the cries and songs of beasts or birds, for which purpose λέγω and λόγος are not used (Trench, 'Syn. of N. T.'). Peter's λαλιὰ betrayed him to the Jerusalem crowd (Matt. xxvi. 73). Λόγος is the substance of the message, the burden of the revelation. The speech (λαλιὰ) of Christ refers to the appropriate and significant clothing which he gave to his word (λόγος). He mournfully asks why they had failed to get to understand the method of his converse; why they perpetually failed to appreciate his discourse; why they

perastently put wrong constructions upon his phrase, and imagined him to be speaking of earthly things when he was discoursing to them of heavenly ones. Why? Because ye cannot hear my word—the Divine communication I have made to you. They were morally so far from him that they could not listen so as to receive his revelation. The inward organ of receptivity was lacking, and “so the spiritual idiom in which he spake was not spiritually understood” (Alford). The Divine significance of the whole word of Christ, the new and strange doctrines of Messiah, of redemption, of the Father, of a sacrifice and death on the part of the Son of man for the salvation of the world excited their animosity and bitter antipathies. They were not conscious of any of the need he came to satisfy, and so they failed to apprehend the entire manner of his revelation. They were from beneath (ver. 23). He is disclosing heavenly things. “Their ears have they closed, lest they should hear.”

Ver. 44.—Ye are of the father who is the devil. In this way the great bulk of the best commentators translate this difficult clause. Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, and Davidson translate, “You are of the father of the devil;” and suggest that here the evangelist betrays his fierce Gnostic (Ophite) antagonism to the Jews, and adopts the view that the God of the Old Testament, the “Creator,” was the Father of the serpent. This is surely untenable. The Creator of all things, in the prologue, is none other than the Father acting through the Logos. In the third, fourth, and fifth chapters, the greatest honours are ascribed to the God of the Jewish people, and not the faintest hint given of such radical divergence from the standpoint of Judaism. In this very passage the father of the faithful Jews is spoken of with profound reverence. “The second-century Gnostic” must have so cleverly concealed his sentiments, and have refuted his position so frequently, that it is inexcusably inept for him to have shown his cloven foot on this occasion. Thoma ignores the wild conjecture of Hilgenfeld. Our Lord was not dealing with the parentage of the devil, but with the moral and religious parentage of those Jews who were manifesting the most bitter antagonism to himself and plotting his destruction. For them to claim spiritual kinship and childlike feeling to the Father whose holy nature and whose love to them he was revealing, was a strange contradiction in terms. Our Lord repudiated it in this terrible language. He had worsted the seductive suggestions of the devil, and when he saw and heard them repeated and set forth as Divine proposals, he gave them their true name. “You disclaim the faintest sympathy with other gods; you resent the

bar sinister on your escutcheon; you say that religiously as well as historically you are not born of any fornication—there is no taint in your theological position; but I tell you plainly that *you are from*, you are manifesting the very essence and substance of, the father who is the prime enemy of God and man. The phrase is in perfect keeping with many synoptic phrases (Matt. xiii. 38; xxiii. 15; cf. John the Baptist's language, Matt. iii. 7). And the lusts of your father—those of falsehood and murder, lying and slaughter, being the top and chief of all his evil passions—ye are willing, desirous to do. He has engendered these very lusts within you. The paternity of your angry passions, your incapacity to see and accept my word, are both alike explained. There is no more terrible rebuke in the whole compass of revelation. The disciple whom Jesus loved, in preserving these words, shows very decidedly that he was a “Son of Thunder,” and calls down fire from heaven (a very storm) which has been ever since descending upon the heads of these and all other bitter antagonists of the Son of man. He was a murderer (literally, a manslayer) from the beginning. This has often been referred to the spirit which animated Cain in the slaughter of his brother Abel. There is some corroboration of such a reference in 1 John iii. 12, “Cain was *ἐκ τοῦ ποιητοῦ* of that wicked one, and slew his brother;” and in the language of 1 John iii. 15, “Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer.” (So Lücke, Reuss, De Wette, and others.) But the narrative of the death of Abel makes no reference to the agency of the devil, but rather indicates that the sin of Cain was originated by his having been begotten in the image of the fallen Adam. The better interpretation and reference of the words may be seen in 1 John iii. 8, “He that doeth sin is from the devil (*ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου*), for the devil sinneth from the beginning (*ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς*).” And sin entered into the world through the seduction and false statements of the devil, by which the first man was veritably slain, his moral nature killed outright. Grace was not shut out, but Adam died. In the day that he ate of the forbidden tree, man most surely and in the deepest sense *died*. “God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of its side do find it” (Wisd. ii. 23, 24; Rev. xii. 9); “Sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Rom. v. 12). The work of destruction at the beginning of humanity upon earth has never been exhausted. In murderous propensity, in lying and seductive words and ways, the children of wrath are ever showing their parentage. To this statement

our Lord added what has by many been regarded as a distinct revelation of the fall of Satan himself from the condition of rectitude (cf. Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4). He stands not; continues not—in the truth (*ἔστηκεν* in the perfect is the better reading, and demands this translation; the rendering of the Vulgate, *stetit*, favoured by Augustine, and involving a reference to the fall of the devil, would have required *εἰστήκει*, pluperfect<sup>1</sup>). Jesus did not, therefore, explicitly assert anything with reference to the act of original revolt of the devil, but declared that the devil has no place in truth; he restlessly resists, throwing a hopeless, perilous glamour of falsehood round all he touches. Schaff suggests, rightly, that the combination of this statement with that of the prologue (ch. i. 3) presupposes the fall of this mighty and murderous spirit from a previous condition of rectitude, and the dictum of our Lord ought never to have been charged with the admission of an eternal principle of evil. The fall of the lost angels is not explicitly stated. Because there is no truth in him. The absence of the article before "truth" shows that in the previous clause the objective truth is meant, that the reality of things as known by him is referred to. The truth was that region or sphere of action in which he elected not to stand, and, as a matter of fact, does not stand nor find place. By "truth" is meant subjective truth or "truthfulness," the spirit which repudiates falsehood in all its forms and manifestations. There is no consistency with himself, no inward harmony with reality. This is given as reason why the devil stands not in the truth. Whensoever<sup>2</sup> he speaketh a lie, he speaketh (*λαλεῖ*) from (*ἐκ*, out of) his own resources—from what is most entirely his own, revealing the depth of his truthless, loveless, fatal, godless nature. Schaff quotes from Göthe's 'Faust' the account which Mephistopheles gives of his own being. Here it is in Kegan Paul's translation—

"I am the spirit, who aye deny!  
And rightly so; for everything  
Is only good for perishing;  
So better 'twere that nought had been,  
And, therefore, all that you call sin  
Ruin, whate'er with evil's rife  
Is my true element of life."

<sup>1</sup> Westcott says, on the authority of N, B\*, D, L, X, the true reading is *οὐκ* (not *οὐχ*) *ἔστηκεν*, the imperfect of *στήκω* (ch. i. 26; Rom. xiv. 4), and means "stood not." *Οὐχ ἔστηκεν* is found in B<sup>3</sup>, C, T, etc., in T.R., and margin of R.T.

<sup>2</sup> The reading *ὅς αν*, "whosoever," instead of *ὅταν*, is allowed by Lachmann on very insufficient grounds.

Göthe exactly expressed the *ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων* by "mein eigentliches element." Because he is a liar, and the father of the liar. This translation makes the *αὐτοῦ* refer to *ψεύστης*, which is the most natural antecedent (so Bengel, Meyer, Lange, Godet, etc.), notwithstanding the difficulty of the construction. This language asserts not only the age-long proof which history gives of the falsehood of this terrible personality, but declares that he exerts an evil paternity in the life of every liar. "Brood of vipers" is a phrase used by John Baptist and Christ himself when addressing Pharisees. The well-known imagery of the first promise, "I will put enmity between her seed and thy seed," etc., suggests the same thought. There is an awful significance in this power of the devil to sow his deadly seed in human life, and to produce thus, on the soil of human nature, "children of the wicked one" (cf. Paul's language, Acts xiii. 10, addressed to Elymas, *υἱὲ διαβόλου*, "son of the devil"). Another translation makes *αὐτοῦ* refer to *ψεύδος*: He is a liar, and the father of falsehood, or thereof (Revised Version); thus drawing an abstract out of the concrete *ψεύστης*, or possibly referring to the first lie which slew the spiritual life of men—to the "Ye shall not surely die" of Gen. iii. 4. It is against this view that our Lord is here dealing with persons rather than with abstractions. Westcott and Moulton and Revised Version in margin have given indefiniteness to the subject of the verb *λαλῇ*, and translate, "Whensoever one [or, 'a man'] speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for his father also is a liar;" the idea being that the evil inheritance from the father of lies has even made falsehood the essential element, the *proprium*, of the liar. This, however, appears to involve a very complicated thought. The *ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων*, if strictly spoken, contradicts the idea of the liar's peculiarities being the result of inheritance. Still less satisfactory is the vain endeavour of the Gnostics, who found here a second reference to the father of the devil. They discovered in some Italic Versions, and in the usage of some of the Fathers, *καθὼς καὶ*, in place of *καὶ*, and so took it to mean, "he is a liar, as also his father." Hilgenfeld and Volkmar have fastened upon this text also, and thus found further proof of Gnostic (Ophite) heresy in the Gospel. Riggensbach and Godet have remarked that, if the father of the devil was spoken of in the previous clause, "his father" would mean "the father of the father of the devil"! We have already seen how groundless such a charge against the Gospel is, and how such a rendering would throw the entire context into confusion. If we accept the first translation, we find that our Lord



announces a doctrine concerning the devil, and conveys more information than can be obtained from any other source. This is not mere accommodation to the consciousness of a *dæmoniac* or the prejudices of the Jews, as some have interpreted Christ's language in the synoptic Gospels, but it is distinct dogmatic teaching about the personality, character, and method of the devil.

Ver. 45.—Then, turning to these children of the wicked one, Christ delivered a tremendous denunciation: But because I say the truth—because I am the Organ, Utterance, and Incarnation of the truth—ye believe me not. If he spake lies to them, they would greedily receive them. The very cause of their lack of credence is the utterance of truth. The “I” is emphatic, and set over against the “you” of the second clause. There is a tragic force about this charge almost unparalleled, implying the most wilful estrangement from God, a rejection of known truth because it was truth, a love of darkness because it was darkness, a moral obtuseness which answers to the terrible language, “Lest they should see with their eyes,” etc.

Ver. 46.—Which of you convicteth me of sin? *Ἐλέγχο* is used in the sense of ch. xvi. 6—8 (see note)—Which of you can justify a charge of sin against me? can bring it home to me or others? *Sin* (*ἁμαρτία*) is not mere “error,” as Erasmus and some others have urged, because the word throughout the New Testament (and in the classics when not accompanied by some explanatory term) always means “contrariety to the will of God,” moral offence not intellectual defect (so Meyer, Luthardt, Godet, Westcott). Nor is it sound exegesis to limit *ἁμαρτία* to one particular form of sin (such as “false doctrine,” Calvin, Melancthon, Tholuck). There is no need to limit its reference; and in the unanswered query, while we cannot say that by itself this passage is sufficient to demonstrate the sinlessness of Christ, it reveals a sublime depth in his translucent consciousness that places him—unless he were the most deluded or self-sufficient of human teachers—on a different position from all other Divine messengers. In proportion as other great moral prophets have set their own standard high, they have become conscious of their own defects; and from Moses to St. Paul, from Augustine to St. Francis, the saintliest men have been the most alive to their own departures from their ideas of right. The standard of Jesus is higher than that of any other, and he appears nevertheless absolutely without need of repentance, above the power of temptation, beyond the range of conviction. True, the Jews brought a charge of madness and

folly upon him immediately; but, so far from convincing him or mankind, they stand for ever covered with the shame of their own incompetence to apprehend his message or himself. He being, then, without sin, and assuming that he stands in the eternal truth, and is the absolute Truth of things, and that he cannot from his moral purity deceive or misinform them, and that his testimony to himself is final, sufficient, and trustworthy, asks, If I say the truth—without your having convicted me of sin or brought any moral obliquity or offence against me—if I say (*the*) truth, why do ye not believe me? The reason is in them rather than in him. Their non-belief discloses no flaw in his revelation, but makes it evident that they and he are on different planes of being, with a discrepant, opposed, moral paternity. “Why do ye not believe me?” He marvelled at their unbelief! He is from God; they are from God's great enemy. The moral perfection of Jesus as the God-Man is absolutely necessary to his character as “God's Lamb,” as “the Only Begotten,” “the Son,” and as “the Judge,” of the human race. As he subsequently said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” To account for this sinless, perfect humanity, the entire conception of the Divine nature blended in indissoluble union with his own is found imperative at every epoch of Christ's life. At every development of his official character, in every new combination of circumstance, in conflict and sorrow, when smarting from treachery and dying alone upon the cross, he is “perfect,” he fulfils the perfect norm, he reaches the standard of Divine humanity. There is no discrepance here with even Mark's account of his language to the young ruler (Mark x. 18), for he does not there say that he is not good, nor does he do other than suggest that he is identified with the One who is good.

Vers. 47—58.—(6) THE I AM. *The claim to be the Source of liberty and life, in reply to those who appealed to their Father God and their father Abraham, led Jesus to assert his anteriority to Abraham.*

Ver. 47.—There was some pause after this searching inquiry. Silence showed that, if they could not convince him of sin, they were ready with no answer to his question. He assumes that his word is unanswerable; he is what he says he is, and is able to set men free from sin and to give them eternal life. Their position is still further explained by a distinct syllogism, of which the major premiss is: He that is of God heareth the words of God; words which it is obviously taken for granted he is freely, surely uttering. Who are the persons referred to? Some, like Hilgenfeld, dis-

cover here a Manichæan, Gnostic sense—"those who are essentially of a Divine origin and spiritual nature," are absolutely different from those who are of the psychic or hylie nature. Thus they cut away all force from the moral reproof which follows. Others insist that here Jesus speaks of the regenerated man, the true child of God, who has power to believe, who has come to the Father, being predestinated unto eternal life. Even this interpretation does not leave sufficiently ample play to the human freedom, and the personal self-responsibility, which pervades the teaching of the gospel. Elsewhere he speaks of those who are "of the truth" and "hear his voice," of "those whom the Father draws" to him by the very love and grace which he, the Son, lavishes upon them (see notes, ch. vi. 37, 44; xviii. 37; xvii. 6, 9, 11). He also speaks of those who come to him being given to him. He is here contemplating this wide class, who are scattered through all time and places, with susceptible minds capable of hearing freely, and believing when they hear, the words of God. For this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God; i.e. seeing that ye do not hear the words of God, it is evident that ye are not of God. They are not excluded from becoming so by any irreversible fate, but their present obtuseness of spiritual perception, their refusal to accept truth on its clearest exposition, shows that they are not born of God; they are not being drawn to him by inworking of the Father's grace. The very form of the expression was once more meant to touch their consciences.

Ver. 48.—But it brought from them a shout of derision and a burst of scornful mockery. The Jews answered and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a dæmon? They imagine that the bare charge that they, the leaders of Israel, are "not of God," and that they reveal the fact by their inability to hear the words of God then sounding in their ears, was flat heresy, a gross lack of patriotism, and proved that, in his lofty self-assertion, he was no better than a Samaritan—the most hated of their neighbours. They return a harsh *tu-quoque* to our Lord's refusal to admit their Abrahamic descent, and his condemnation of their utter moral dissimilarity from their putative father. The sentence, "a Samaritan art thou!" is singularly insulting in its tone and form. We cannot measure the exact amount of insult they condensed into this word, whether it be of heresy, or alienation from Israel, or accusation of impure descent. It is remarkable that our Lord had shown special kindness to Samaritans (ch. iv.), and had made in his parable "the good Samaritan" the type of

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neighbourly love; but these very Jews had, in the height of this controversy, accused him of being a "Galilæan," and it is not probable that they used the term otherwise than as a soubriquet of scorn. Edersheim (*loc. cit.*, ii. 174, 175) would translate into Aramaic the language here cited, and finds in its form *Shomron* the real interpretation of its meaning. *Shomron* is, according to him, used in rabbinical writing for *Ashmedai*, and in the cabbalists is used for *Sammael* or *Satan*. Arabian traditions are brought in to confirm this interpretation of the speech, which he regards as equivalent to "Thou art a child of the devil," thus retorting upon Jesus the charge that they were doing the works of their father, the devil. The one expression is thought by Edersheim equivalent to that which follows, *thou hast a dæmon*; and his explanation is thought to cover our Lord's silence respecting it. In our opinion this is far-fetched and unnatural. Christ's silence is better justified by his refusal to regard such a term as conveying opprobrium. He had risen above the distinction of race, and could afford to despise the taunt. In ch. vii. 20 (see note) a similar charge had been made by the angry Jews. The Lord is accused of being mastered by some dæmon, who is perverting his mind and confusing his speech. Some further force is added to the charge from the language of the Talmud, 'Jebamoth,' fol. 47, a: "R. Nachman, son of Isaac, said to a Samaritan, 'Thou art a Outhite, and testimony from thy mouth has no validity.'"

Ver. 49.—To this Jesus answered, in calm and patient remonstrance, I have not a dæmon. No strange or evil power haunts me; I am perfectly clear in my consciousness. Once before, when accused of complicity with Beelzebub, he had retorted with awful solemnity, and an appeal to the conscience of his enemies and to the patent facts of his own warfare with all the kingdom of Satan. It is interesting to observe that he takes no notice of the charge, "Thou art a Samaritan." If the above suggestion of Edersheim were accepted, the silence would be explained; but it was more probably occasioned by Christ's unwillingness to repudiate fellowship with this persecuted nationality. The parable of the good Samaritan was probably delivered about this time. Here he simply repudiated the second charge, and added, But I honour my Father, in declaring that these words of his would be acceptable to you if you were of God (ver. 47), and (the *καὶ* strengthens the contrast between the two clauses rather than between the "I" and "you")—and, while I am doing honour to my Father, ye are dishonouring me; for you are casting these reproaches upon me, refusing my offers of mercy, free-

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dom, and life, veritable revelations though they be of the heart of the Father.

Ver. 50.—But, in honouring my Father, and in quietly bearing your unjustifiable reproaches, I am not seeking my glory (cf. vers. 28, 42; ch. vii. 18). The claim of Christ to be and do so much is made because he has the happiness of the world, the salvation and life of men, and the glory of the Father as his consuming passion. He is not seeking his own glory; he is only crowning himself with the crown of utter self-abnegation. But, while he repudiates all care for his own glory, he knows that there is One to whom that glory is dear, who seeketh his glory, and with whom it is perfectly safe, and who judgeth with absolute impartiality and infinite knowledge. Westcott quotes in illustration of *ὁ ἡρώων*, Philo on Gen. xlii. 22, "He that seeketh [maketh inquisition for blood] is not man, but God, or the Logos, or the Divine Law" ("De Jos.," 29).

Ver. 51.—Verily, verily. This impressive commencement of discourse implies that a new turn is given to the conversation, and that the gravest solemnity and importance is attached to the utterance. It is impossible that the Jews should have listened unmoved to Christ's rejoinder on their rude taunt, or been unimpressed by the self-composed and lofty way in which the honour of our Lord was calmly entrusted by him to the Father. The Jews may say what they please, call him by any opprobrious name they choose; "there is One that seeketh" his glory, and he is content. He has, in earlier portions of this discourse, promised freedom and sonship to those who abide in his word; and now to those who believed on him he says, with extraordinary emphasis, If a man (any one) have kept my word, he shall never behold death. This "keeping" is more than "abiding" in the word. There is the additional notion of intently watching the "keeping," which issues in "fulfilling" and "obeying" (Meyer and Tholuck); see ver. 55; ch. xiv. 15, 21, 23; xv. 20; xvii. 6. The opposite of *τηρεῖν* would be "to disregard;" the opposite of *φύλασσειν* would be "to let slip" (Westcott). The promise is dazzling: "He shall never behold," i.e. steadily or exhaustively know by experience, what death means and is. He may pass through physical death, he may (*γένηται*) taste of dissolution, he may come before the judgment-seat, he may see corruption (*ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν*); but he will not behold (*θεωρεῖν*) death. He will never know what death is (cf. here; ch. iv. 14; v. 24; vi. 51, where the Saviour speaks of the "living water," and "life eternal," and "living bread," which whoso partaketh shall never die. See also ch. xi. 26). He does not

tell his disciples that they shall not see the grave, but that in the deepest sense they shall never die. "Death" and "life" are words that are lifted into a higher connotation. Death is a moral state, not an event in their physical existence.

Ver. 52.—The Jews—the adverse dominant party, ready always to misunderstand his words—(then<sup>1</sup>) said to him, Now—in reference to their own charge (ver. 48), which he had solemnly disclaimed—we know (*we have come to know, ἐγνώκαμεν*) that thou hast a dæmon. They imply that he must be under some most bewildering hallucination. These words have scattered their momentary hesitation. They must have reasoned thus: "He who claims such power for his own words must have personal immunity from death. This is a dæmoniacal folly and delusion. There have been greater than he who heard and kept the words of God, and who, nevertheless, did not escape death." Abraham died, and the prophets (died); and thou sayest, If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death. Here observe the wilful alteration of the Saviour's words. In place of *τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν*, "the word that is mine," they quote him as saying, *τὸν λόγον μου*, "my word," "the word of me" which conveys a more personal claim; and again, in lieu of the remarkable phrase, *οὐ θεωρεῖται*, they say, *οὐ μὴ γένηται*, equivalent to "shall not in any way experience death"—a form of expression incompatible with the fact of the physical death of his followers and *à fortiori* of himself. The believer, even like the Lord, does taste of death (Heb. ii. 9), but he does not see it. The phrase, *γέσσεται θανάτου*, is a rabbinical one for "drinking the cup of death" (cf. ch. xviii. 11; Rev. xviii. 6).

Ver. 53.—Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou<sup>2</sup> thyself? This use of *ποιεῖν* is not uncommon. "By thy own statements, whom wouldst thou have us believe that thou art?" (cf. ch. v. 18; x. 33; xix. 7, 12). This claim to be Giver of immunity from death, and the further assumption that the belief of and continuance in his word would metamorphose and transfigure death itself, implied functions which "made" Jesus mightier, more august, than either Moses or Elijah, Abraham or the

<sup>1</sup> N, B, and O omit the *οὕτως*; and so R.T., Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Tregelles, but not Lachmann, or T.R., or Godet.

<sup>2</sup> The *συ* is omitted by R.T., with Tischendorf (8th edit.), on the authority of N, A, B, C, D, and many other manuscripts and versions and Fathers. The omission does not convey the same angry scorn that is involved in its presence.

prophets, who were dead. "These all died: who art thou?"

Ver. 54.—Our Lord does not immediately or directly reply to their question. He was not making himself to be anything. He was simply declaring the fact. He does not return on the astounding assertion of ver. 51, but confirms it by reaffirming his own relation to the Father, and that sense of absolute and perfect union with the Father on which his entire ministry was based. Jesus answered, If I glorify myself—if I, from the ground of my own human consciousness, and apart from the Father who is with me and in me, and who "seeketh my glory" (ver. 50), if I have no unique relation and access to the Father, as you Jews seem to imply—then my glory—the glory of giving eternal life, of conferring perfect freedom and sonship upon those who continue in and keep my word; then all this glory which I claim—is nothing. But neither is the hypothesis one of fact, nor is the conclusion (fair enough on that hypothesis) a truth. "I am not glorifying myself, making myself anything other than I am." It is my Father who is glorifying me (cf. ver. 50, both for construction and sense); of whom ye say, that he is our [your<sup>1</sup>] God. They claimed for themselves that they were "of God," and that the Father of whom he spake was no other than their God and Father as well as his. But they have not comprehended their own Scriptures nor God's providence, nor all the revelation which the Father was making of himself in the Son; while their special and monopolizing claim concealed from them the face of the Father.

Ver. 55.—And (*i.e.* while you thus speak, and though you call him your God; cf. a similar use of *καί*, very nearly expressed, but not exactly, by the "yet" of the Authorized Version) ye have not come to know him by all the experiences through which you have passed (cf. ch. vii. 29; xvii. 25; and ver. 19). You do not know the only true God, you have not the knowledge which is life eternal. But I know him, absolutely, intuitively, by the open eye of clearest consciousness, with invincible and perfect assent. The use and contrast of the two verbs *ἐγνώκατε* and *οἶδα*, here and elsewhere, is very striking (see ch. iii. 10; xxi. 17). When our Lord, however, was broadly con-

trasting the Jewish knowledge of God with that of the Samaritans, and identifying himself with the Jews (ch. iv. 22), he uses *οἶδαμεν*. If I should say that I know him not—which I do not and dare not say. Christ could not admit that his absolute knowledge was a delusion. The reality of the Father in his Divine-human consciousness, expressing itself through his human thought and word, was supreme, overmastering, sublime—I shall be, like you, a liar; I should deceive you wilfully, as you are deceiving yourselves. We cannot fail here again to observe the severity of Jesus as portrayed in this Gospel. (There is nothing surely here, or in other numerous utterances in this discourse, inconsistent with the Son of Thunder.) No cowardly modesty (Lange) is possible to him. He knows, and must speak. He cannot, dare not, be silent, or allow these bitter enemies, with their ready malice and perverse and continuous misinterpretation of his words, to be ignorant, either of the ground of his self-consciousness or his penetration of their flimsy excuses. So once more he adds, But I know him, and keep (*τηρῶ*) his word. He will not allow this Divine consciousness to be taken from him, even by the shame and agony of the cross (Lange).

Ver. 56.—Christ then proceeds to the allegation that he was greater than Abraham, and exclaims, Abraham, your father, exulted (a word is used of tumultuous joy, Luke i. 47)—triumphantly rejoiced that he should see my day (so Revised Version, margin). Winer translates the *ἵνα ἴδῃ* in the same way, though that translation really means "exulted in the knowledge that he should see." The "rejoiced to see," of the Authorized Version and Revised Version, implies that, when he thus exulted, he had seen, which is not exactly compatible or consistent with the following clause. If Canon Evans's theory of the use of *ἵνα* in the New Testament in the sense of "the contemplated result" be sound, we have a sufficient translation in "exulted that he would or should see" my day. In Luke xvii. 22 we hear of "one of the days of the Son of man." All those days seem gathered together in the expression, "my day," and can only mean the whole day of his manifestation as the incarnate Word—the day in which, through himself, God had visited his people. When did Abraham exult with so lofty an expectation and desire? Many times in solemn vision and by heavenly voice and holy promise Abraham was led to believe that in himself and in his seed all the nations of the world would be blessed (Gen. xv. 4; xvii. 17; xviii. 10; xxii. 18). This promise made him young again. He staggered not at the promise of God. His

<sup>1</sup> Westcott and Hort, Tregelles, Tischendorf (8th edit.), and Alford read *ἡμῶν* rather than *ὑμῶν*, with A, B<sup>2</sup>, C, L, Γ, Δ, one hundred cursives, and numerous Versions. The "our God" is an important variation from the T.R., because it is a further indication that our Lord does not repudiate the God of those whom he was addressing.

faith was counted for righteousness. He believed that God could and would do what seemed impossible. That which he rejoiced that he should see was the day of Christ, the revelation of the Father, and the way of life proffered to all nations. He anticipated a fulfilment of the promises to such an extent that he rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. So far there is little difficulty. Our imagination easily pictures Abraham in the sacred tumult of a blessed hope concerning that which was eventually realized in the Messianic glory of the Lord Jesus. But our Lord added, He saw it, and was glad. And the interpretations of this clause are very conflicting. Calvin asks whether this does not contradict Luke x. 24, "Many kings and prophets desired to see the things which ye see, and yet did not see them." And he adds, "Faith has its degrees in beholding Christ. The ancient prophets beheld Christ at a distance, but not as present with them." We are reminded by others of Heb. xi. 13, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen and greeted them from afar." Consequently, the only vision of the day of Christ vouchsafed to Abraham was the far-off prophetic glance. This interpretation ignores the difference of two clauses, "exulted that he would see," and "saw it, and was glad." This second clause is supposed by Hengstenberg and others to refer to the vision of the angel of the Lord, the Logos (Gen. xviii.), or to the revelation of the vicarious death and resurrection of Messiah in the sacrifice of Isaac (so Chrysostom and Erasmus). Others, again, have laid emphasis on the "birth of Isaac" as the fulfilment of promises previously made to his faith. Isaac was regarded as "heir of the world," and the embodiment of the Messianic hope. He was the child of promise, of the Spirit rather than of the flesh. This view has been urged by Hofmann, Wordsworth, Westcott. The proper sense was, doubtless, that, since the Lord became incarnate, Abraham's exulting hope has been realized; that which he desired and rejoiced in anticipation to see has now dawned upon him. This becomes an emphatic revelation by our Lord in one palmary case, and therefore presumably in other instances as well, of the relation and communion between the glorified life of the saints, and the events and progress of the kingdom of God upon earth. A great consensus of commentators confirms this interpretation—Origen, Lampe, Lücke, De Wette, Godet, Meyer, Stier, Alford, Lange, Watkins, Thoma. It is objected that this kind of information about the invisible world is contrary to the manner of Christ, and would stand alone. This objection, however, ignores, and especially in the case

of Abraham, other references by our Lord to the same idea and fact. The parable, so called, of the rich man and Lazarus, introduces Abraham as having been acquainted, during their lifetime, with the condition of the two dead men (see Luke xvi. 22—25). And when our Lord, in conflict with the Sadducees, would prove from Scripture and the language of Jehovah in the "passage concerning the bush" that the dead rise, he said, "Since God called himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he was not the God of the dead, but of the living;" therefore Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living, and not dead (Luke xx. 36—38). In like manner, Moses and Elijah are represented as conversing with Jesus concerning the decease (*ἐξόδου*) he was about to accomplish (Luke ix. 30, 31). St. Peter (1 Epist. i. 12) declares that the angels desire to look into the mysteries of human redemption. St. Paul tells us that the principalities and powers in heavenly places receive fresh illustration of the manifold wisdom of God by and from the Church on earth (Eph. iii. 10). So that the idea is one in harmony with many other lines of Divine revelation. Abraham rejoiced at the advent of Christ. He has seen it, and been gladdened. The angels sang their praises at the birth of Christ, and rejoiced over one penitent sinner (Luke xv.). The patriarchs also rejoice that the promises which they handed down to the generations that would follow them have been fulfilled. The 'Midrash' declares, says Wünsche, that Abraham saw the Law-giving on Sinai, and rejoiced at it. Westcott says the "tense" is decisive against this joy of Abraham in Paradise. But the acurist simply calls attention to the effect at once produced upon the consciousness of Abraham as soon as he became aware of the day of the Son of man. Rabbinical ideas of the knowledge communicated to Abraham concerning the career of his descendants confirm and illustrate this interpretation; while the light thus cast upon the darkness of the grave expounds the great statement, "He that continueth in [keepeth] my word shall not see death."

Ver. 57.—The Jews, therefore, said unto him—once more misinterpreting his words, and giving a materialistic tone to his Divine hint—Thou hast not yet fifty years—"Thou art not fifty years old"—and hast thou seen Abraham? Christ did not say that he had seen Abraham, but that Abraham had seen and rejoiced in his day. The Jews chose to regard the language of Jesus as adding another immense improbability, if not falsehood, to his previous claims, viz. that he had actually lived to twice the age of Methuselah already. The "fifty years old" may

have been simply used in round numbers for the age of man's prime and completed life (Numb. iv. 3, 39; viii. 24). There may have been, even if our Lord was only thirty-three years of age at the time of his Passion, that which *apparently* added to his years. A tradition is mentioned (Irenæus, c. ii. 22. 5) of the more advanced age of Jesus which the Ephesian presbyters preserved, and which Irenæus regards as between the forty-fifth and fiftieth years. Ernest de Bunsen vainly finds a reference to Christ's age (ch. ii. 20) in the forty-six years of the temple; but it is strange that, with the exception of the statement in Luke iii. 23, there is nothing in the extraneous chronological data, e.g. the death of Herod and recall of Pontius Pilate, which need positively compress our Lord's life within fifty years (Westcott). And Keim has made the suggestion that our Lord did carry on his ministry for a much longer period than is commonly supposed. It is far more probable, however, that the Jews were using an expression for the term of a completed life, and were supplying no chronological data whatever.

Ver. 58.—The reply of Jesus to this taunt is one of the most surprising and baffling kind on any hypothesis of our Lord's consciousness being limited as that of all other of the sons of men. He gives the solemn emphasis of the *Ἀὐτὸν, αὐτὸν* once more—Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born (came into being), I am. Abraham came into existence by birth (the Vulgate translates, *Antequam fieret Abraham: Ego sum*): I am. Numerous attempts have been made to explain this climactic utterance on some humanistic theory. The contrast is very remarkable between *γενέσθαι* and *εἰμι*. Jesus Christ declared his own timeless existence to have been in his consciousness before Abraham came into being at all. The "I am" reminds us repeatedly, when used by Jesus, of the "I AM THAT I AM" of Exod. iii. 14, and the "thou art" of Ps. xc. (lxxxix. 2, LXX.); cii. 28. His human consciousness gave utterance to the awful depths of the eternal Ego. Now, some critics have limited it in its meaning to "I existed in the counsel of God." But there are three objections to this interpretation: one is (1) that the present tense, *εἰμι*, and not the past, *ἦν*, was used by our Lord; and (2) on this interpretation Abraham must have also equally pre-existed in the counsel of God; and (3) such a statement would throw no light on the previous discourse. The Racovian Confession of Faith, based on the view of Socinus, explains, "Before Abram becomes Abraham, i.e. the father of many nations, I am it, the Messiah, the Light of the

world." Not until my Messianic claims are acknowledged, and the many nations become children of Abraham, does Abraham really become Abraham, does his name derive its full meaning. This would be rabbinical trifling (J. P. Smith, 'Script. Test. to Messiah,' vol. ii.). Beyschlag thinks that our Lord realized in his Person not a conscious pre-existence before Abraham, or before all worlds, but an impersonal principle, the image of God, which could only "be" in the eternal mind of God. There is a sense in which every man may realize such pre-existence as this, not merely "the Son of God" nor the new man in Christ, but every man whatsoever; but such a statement is entirely out of harmony with the whole passage that precedes. If the Jews had understood it in this sense, they would not have taken up stones to stone him, but, after their wont, would have said, "So also were we." "Ideas do not see one another." The first *ἐγὼ εἰμι* (ver. 12) brought out their angry unbelief, but this excites their murderous assault. We have to observe that this remarkable expression does not stand alone. St. John had reasons for saying "that the Word was with God, and was God, and was made flesh" (ch. i. 1, 3, 14). If Jesus, in his Divine consciousness, had never elsewhere spoken of having had a *being* before his *manifestation* (ch. vi. 46, 62; xvii. 5), of having taken part with the Father from the beginning (ch. v. 17), of being "one with the Father" (ch. x. 30, 33), of being greater than the temple or the sabbath, as being the Object of the eternal love in coming down from heaven, in laying down his life that he might take it again (ch. x. 17, 18); and if the language of the apostles (Heb. i. 1, 2; Col. i. 17; Rev. i. 18) had not entirely prepared our mind for the data on which such conclusions rested, a generation before this Gospel was reduced to form, we might join the effort to resist such a claim as that of eternal pre-existence. But the whole tenor of the Gospel and the entire New Testament teaching are seen, more and more, to turn upon this fundamental position—that in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead, that he had life in himself, and eternity, and that the manhood has not only been lifted to the highest place in human remembrance, but to the midst of the throne.

Ver. 59.—(7) *The conflict and the victory.* Therefore—because he said this, which if it had no basis in fact was rank blasphemy—they took up stones of the temple-court to cast at (upon) him. "They rushed from the porch into the court of the Gentiles, to pick up stones to cast them at him; but once more 'his hour had not yet come,' and their fury proved impotent. Hiding himself in one

of the many passages or gateways of the temple, he presently passed out" (Ederheim). But Jesus hid himself, and went forth from the temple [<sup>1</sup> going through the

<sup>1</sup> This clause of T.R. is not in  $\aleph$ , B, D,  $\alpha$ , b, c, or Vulgate, and appears differently worded in the manuscripts which contain it. The later corrections of  $\aleph$  with C, L, X, numerous uncials and cursives, contain it; but Tischendorf (8th edit.), Meyer, Westcott and Hort, R.T., and Godet, omit it, on the ground that it is a marginal gloss, occasioned by the opening words of the next chapter, and a reminiscence of Luke iv. 30.

midst of them, and so passed by]. There is no need to imagine more than the exercise of his majestic energy before which *dæmoniæ* quailed, and Pilate trembled, and the guards of the temple fell abashed. The crisis of his ministry in Jerusalem is approaching. How often would he have gathered them, and given to them eternal life, but *they* would not!

Baur defends them, and finds in them a docetic view of the humanity of Jesus; but the docetic view would have demanded *ἀπαρτος ἐγέρετο*, not *ἐκρύβητο*.

### HOMILETICS.

**Vers. 1—11.**—*The woman caught in adultery.* This narrative, if not inspired Scripture, bears all the traces of a genuine tradition.

I. THE PLOT OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. They brought to Jesus a woman caught in the act of adultery, and demanded his judgment concerning her act. "They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the Law commanded us, that such should be stoned: what sayest thou?" 1. *Their conduct was not dictated by their abhorrence of this sin*; for all evidence goes to show that Roman looseness had penetrated into every part of the Jewish community. Besides, if they had been sincere, they would have taken her to the lawful judge. 2. *It was not due to any extreme respect they entertained for the Law of Moses*; for they had on this question made it practically void by their traditions. Instead of putting the adulteress to death, they deprived her of her dowry and divorced her. 3. *Their true motive was "that they might have to accuse him."* (1) Moses' Law did not make adultery a capital offence in the case of all adulteresses, but attached the punishment of stoning to the case of betrothed virgins (Deut. xxii. 23). (2) The scribes and Pharisees presented a serious dilemma to Jesus. (a) If he answered that the woman should be stoned, he brought himself into collision with the Roman government, which retained the power of life and death in its own hands, and in any case did not punish adultery with death. (b) If he answered that she should not be stoned, he would be charged with opposing the Law of Moses, and would thus be represented by the Sanhedrin as a false Messiah; for the true Messiah was to establish the supremacy of the Law. (3) If he pronounced a severe judgment, he would lose his popularity with the multitudes; for he had the reputation of showing mercy to sinners. He ate with them and received them, and declared that publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of heaven.

II. MARK HOW OUR LORD BAFFLED HIS WILY QUESTIONERS. 1. *He appears at first to disregard their appeal to his judgment*; for he began to write upon the ground, and appeared to be absorbed in the act. His silence provokes them to insist upon an answer. 2. *The answer is at once definite and effective.* "Let him that is without sin first cast a stone at her." (1) He does not say—Let her be stoned. That might present him as harsh and unmerciful. (2) He does not say—Let her not be stoned. That would be to oppose the Law of Moses. (3) He carries the question out of the judicial sphere altogether. (a) He does not arrogate the right of a civil magistrate either to decree or inflict punishment. He once before declined to become a divider between two brothers in the matter of their inheritance. (b) He disarmed the self-constituted judges of the woman, by carrying the question into a sphere in which they were themselves brought into judgment. Accordingly, they shrank in his presence from asserting their sinlessness; and they disappeared, one by one, from the scene, leaving the woman alone with Jesus.

III. OUR LORD'S TREATMENT OF THE WOMAN. "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said

to her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." 1. *Our Lord's question does not excuse her sin, nor imply any connivance at it*, but is designed to lead her to serious thoughts of it. 2. *The woman does not deny her sin*. 3. *Our Lord's saying does not imply forgiveness*. "It is a declaration of sufferance, not of justification," and is designed to lead her to repentance and faith.

Ver. 12.—*Jesus the Light of the world*. As he had applied to himself one of the typical miracles of the wilderness, so here he represents himself as the antitype of the fiery pillar that led the Israelites during their long pilgrimage.

I. JESUS AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life." 1. *Jesus was a Light to the Gentiles as well as the Jews*. (Isa. xlii. 6.) Like the sun, his light is diffused through all nations of the earth. 2. *He is the Light of truth to the understanding*. "In thy light shall they see light" (Ps. xxxvi. 9). The Light of truth to the understanding, the Light of love to the heart, the Light of righteousness to the conscience. 3. *He is the Light of glory*. "The Lamb is the Light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23). Happy, therefore, are they who are his followers now!

II. THE BLESSING OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE LIGHT. 1. *It is a blessing for those who are moving forward, not for those who are going backward into darkness*. (1) The allusion is to the Israelites following the guidance of the fiery pillar through the dark night. (2) The believer follows, not precedes, the Light. Jesus goes before every man to make his way plain. Christian life is a following Jesus step by step. 2. *The believer will not walk in darkness*. (1) Consider the significance of this darkness. (a) There is danger in darkness. (b) There is discomfort in darkness. (c) There is fear in darkness. (2) The believer is delivered from the darkness (a) of ignorance, for once he knew not what he was, where he was, or whither he was going; (b) of error, for he walks in the truth of the gospel; (c) of unbelief, for he walks by faith in Christ; (d) of sin, for he sees Christ and enjoys the blessed promise, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." 3. *The believer shall have the Light of life*. (1) This is the Light which springs from life. "In him was life, and the life was the Light of men." Just as the light that is abroad over the world, reflected from object to object, streams from the sun, so all the Light that streams from believers downward upon a dark world comes from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. (2) It is the Light that issues in life. (3) It is a growing Light; "it increases to the perfect day." (4) It is a Light that can never be extinguished.

Vers. 13—18.—*The objection of the Pharisees, and the answer of our Lord*. "Thou bearest testimony to thyself; thy testimony is not true." 1. *Superficially regarded, the objection was one of which Jesus himself had admitted the force*. "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true" (ch. v. 31). In that case he had spoken of himself as mere man. Now he speaks of himself in his Divine nature. 2. *But the essential characteristic of Christ's being was that he was, as the Light, self-manifesting*. He was himself his own evidence. The Jews were standing in the light of day; they did not need any proof that the sun had risen. 3. *Our Lord's answer claims his true position*. (1) His own teaching is sufficient, for it is supported by sufficient guarantees. (2) Christianity is based on the testimony which Jesus gives of himself. "And still if I bear testimony of myself, my testimony is true: because I know whence I came, and whither I go." (a) He knows that he came from heaven—that the "Son of man descended from heaven;" (b) that he is "to go away" to heaven as his home. (3) The ignorance of these Pharisees on these facts is their reproach. "But you, ye do not know whence I come, nor whither I go." (a) They imagined him to be the Son of Joseph and Mary. (b) They interpreted his words about "going away" to mean his departure among the Gentiles, or to mean suicide itself. (c) Their judgment was based upon appearances. "You judge after the flesh." They deemed him to be no more than an ordinary man, a sinner like themselves. If they had any spiritual discernment, they would have recognized his Divine nature. (d) His judgment was not single and alone. "I judge no one. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." The Pharisees formed their judgment without seeking higher guidance; but he did not judge apart from his Father. He but delivers



to the world the judgment of his Father. (c) His judgment followed the full prescription of the Mosaic Law. "And it is moreover written in your Law, that the testimony of two men is true." There was the double witness of himself and his Father. "I am One that bear witness concerning myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." (a) His miracles and his words were his own witnesses. (b) The Father's witness was borne in prophecy, in the voice at the baptism and at the transfiguration, as well as in all the miracles of his personal ministry.

Vers. 19, 20.—*The scornful rejoinder of the Pharisees.* "Where is thy Father?"

I. THE APPEAL TO AN UNSEEN AND ABSENT WITNESS DOES NOT SATISFY THE ENEMIES OF JESUS. They ask not, "Who is thy Father?" but "Where is thy Father?" that he may be produced before us as a witness to thy claims.

II. OUR LORD'S ANSWER. "Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also." 1. *Their ignorance of Christ's Divine nature was patent all along.* 2. *Their ignorance of the Father was necessitated morally by their ignorance of the Son;* for it is he who reveals the Father. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" "No man can know the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him." The eye of faith needed to supplement the eye of sense.

III. THE PUBLICITY AND BOLDNESS OF OUR LORD'S TEACHING. "These words spake Jesus, as he taught near the treasury in the temple." 1. *Therefore in the very centre of Jewish life, under the very eyes of the Sanhedrim.* 2. *The Jews, though ready to destroy him, were restrained by conscience and by public opinion from "laying their hands upon him."* 3. *The hour of our Lord was not yet come.*

Vers. 21—25.—*A warning to the Jews of the importance of the present hour.* It was, probably, in the last day of the feast that our Lord uttered this warning.

I. THE SOLEMN ISSUES THAT HUNG UPON HIS CONTINUED SOJOURN WITH THE JEWS. "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and ye shall die in your sin: whither I go, ye cannot come." 1. *Their rejection of him would close heaven against them.* They could not possibly enter into that "rest" on account of their unbelief. 2. *His death was a matter fixed by the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."* Through death he is to pass upward to his kingdom and glory. 3. *The Jewish search after him would be in the day of their overwhelming despair, and would be fruitless because not in the way of faith.* 4. *The separation between Jesus and the Jews would be made perpetual by their sin.* "Ye shall die in your sin." The sin was that of unbelief, in "departing from the living God." "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins."

II. THE SPIRIT OF SCORNFUL LEVITY WITH WHICH THESE ISSUES ARE TREATED BY THE JEWS. "Will he kill himself? for he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come?" 1. *There is an evident increase in Jewish bitterness.* Lately they asked—Would he go as a Messiah to the Gentiles? now they ask—Would he go to the dead? 2. *They insinuate that to follow him to the grave is out of the question.* If he killed himself, he would find himself in hell; they, on the other hand, expected to find themselves at death in Abraham's bosom. 3. *The question reveals the deepening moral separation between Jesus and his enemies.*

III. THE CAUSE OF THEIR INABILITY EITHER TO FOLLOW OR TO UNDERSTAND HIM. "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore said I unto you, that ye shall die in your sins." 1. *They belonged to a different sphere from himself.* His origin and nature were from heaven; their origin and nature were from earth. There could, therefore, be no moral understanding between them. "They were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them" (Eph. iv. 23). 2. *Fatal effect of this worldly nature.* "For if ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." As following the course of this world, as minding earthly things, but, above all, as refusing to recognize his essential Divinity, they were separated from him who was the true Source of life, and were doomed to die in their sins.

IV. THE RENEWAL OF THEIR SCORNFUL QUESTIONING. "Then said they unto him, Who art thou? Jesus saith to them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning." 1. *How indurated was the unbelief of the Jews!* They had received "line upon line, precept upon precept," and yet they rejected Christ. 2. *How utterly*

*without excuse was their unbelief!* They had heard but one consistent declaration of truth, ever growing in clearness and fullness; yet there was no spiritual or intellectual response to this teaching.

**Vers. 26—29.—A still clearer revelation in store for them. I. JESUS HAS A STILL FULLER REVELATION TO GIVE THEM OF THEIR MORAL CONDITION.** “I have many things to say and to judge concerning you.” 1. *His judgment is true.* “But he that sent me is true.” He only declares the judgment of his Father concerning their actions. 2. *The Jews could not recognize the Divine origin of this judgment.* “They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.”

**II. HIS CRUCIFIXION WOULD MAKE MANY THINGS CLEAR TO THEIR MINDS.** “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself.” That dreadful event would reveal the secrets of many hearts. 1. *He recognizes the Jews as the future instruments of his crucifixion.* Verily it was “with wicked hands” they slew him (Acts ii. 23). 2. *Though he was to be crucified in weakness, yet he was to live by the power of God.* 3. *His death was the gateway to his ascension-glory.* 4. *His death would establish the absolute unity of purpose and action that existed between himself and his Father.* 5. *The effect of the Son’s obedience to his Father’s will.* “The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” The Father’s presence is not accounted for merely by the Son’s active and perfect obedience, but is the spring and principle of it.

**Vers. 30—32.—The bondage of the Jews, and the source of true liberty.** The effect of the previous discourse was remarkable.

**I. THE INTELLECTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF JESUS BY THE JEWS.** “As he spake these words, many believed on him.” They accepted his statements, and believed him to be the Messiah. They were not, however, true believers, because Jesus afterwards represents them as seeking to kill him (ver. 37).

**II. THE COUNSEL OF OUR LORD TO THE NEW CONVERTS.** “If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” 1. *The necessity of steadfastness in the truth.* (1) It is implied that obstacles would have to be overcome. Satan is ever at hand to pluck the good seed of the Word out of the heart. The strength of Jewish prejudice would mass itself against the truth. (2) Steadfastness is a condition of discipleship. The words of Christ imply the first rude beginnings of faith. It implies that Christ’s Word has come with power, and has a place in their hearts. 2. *The blessed privilege of steadfast disciples.* “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (1) The truth being the element in which the Christian lives, there is in his abiding in it a guarantee for fuller knowledge. “In thy light shall we see light.” While others should be ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, the Christian receives a larger knowledge—is led into all truth, and sees more of the beauty and glory of Christ. (2) The truth gives true freedom. (a) This was more than freedom from Roman rule, which was expected to fall with the advent of the Messiah. (b) As evil has its stronghold in darkness, the light of truth destroys it, and thus the Christian is freed from ignorance and error, and the indisposition to all good.

**Vers. 33—36.—Misapprehension of the disciples corrected. I. THEIR STRANGE MISCONCEPTION.** “They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?” 1. *We cannot imagine the speakers to be capable of the absurdity of making a historical misstatement.* The facts of Jewish history were universally known at Jerusalem. The Jews could not deny the Egyptian, Babylonian, Syrian, and Roman conquests. They either referred to the civil liberty which they had long enjoyed, or they meant to assert that they had never recognized their conquerors or acquiesced in their dominion. 2. *Yet there was a serious misunderstanding springing from their prevailingly carnal tone.* They seemed as yet unable to recognize the inner bondage of soul which is dissolved by grace.

**II. OUR LORD’S ELUCIDATION OF THE MYSTERY.** “Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.” 1. *He refers to the habitual sinner, not to the man who commits an individual act of transgression.* Such a man gives himself to sin, sells himself to work

wickedness, and takes pleasure in sin. 2. *Every sinner has a master, who has dominion over him, and gives wages to his servants.* "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 22), because he obeys it in the lusts thereof. 3. *Perfect freedom is only to be enjoyed in perfect harmony with the Divine will*, inasmuch as slavery to sin implies a false relationship to God. 4. *Mark the contrasted situations of the servant and the Son.* "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: the Son abideth ever." (1) As Abraham's seed, the Jews would remember how Isaac, the son of the free-woman, remained in the house as the heir of promise, while Ishmael, as the son of the bond-woman, was cast out. Our Lord adheres to the lines of ancient history, so as to mark the distinction between Jews who failed to recognize the privilege of sons, and those who were as sons introduced into the true spiritual freedom of Abraham's seed. (2) Yet he points to himself as the true Enfranchiser of the slave. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." He only could place the slave on a new footing in the household. It is Christ who gives us true freedom (Gal. v. 1). It is true freedom, because it is freedom (a) from guilt and condemnation; (b) from the dominion of sin; (c) from the accusing voice of the Law; (d) from the darkness of ignorance and error; (e) it is freedom of access to God at all times (Eph. ii. 18); (f) it holds out the expectation of the glorious liberty of sons of God hereafter (Rom. viii. 21).

Vers. 37—47.—*The spiritual parentage of the faithless Jews.* Jesus does not deny their legitimate descent from Abraham. Truth must be conceded to an adversary.

I. THEIR MORAL PARENTAGE CANNOT BE TRACED TO ABRAHAM. "But ye seek to kill me, because my Word makes no progress in you." 1. *Our Lord concedes that his Word had somehow made an entrance*, but national prejudices hindered its thorough acceptance in heart as well as mind. 2. *The explanation of the resistance given to the full power of the truth.* "As for me, I speak that which I have seen with the Father: and ye do the things which ye have heard from your father." (1) Christ reveals the Father's mind and will, as he is the Word, coming forth from the bosom of the uncreated Godhead. The Son's knowledge is (a) perfect and (b) direct. (2) The Jews derived their knowledge, as well as evil impulses, from the devil. (a) The devil is actively engaged in misleading those who have accepted the truth even intellectually. (b) The unstable nature is very open to evil guidance.

II. THE PERSISTENCY OF THE JEWISH CLAIM TO A PURE ABRAHAMIC DESCENT. "Abraham is our father." 1. *The Jews already claimed an interest in the Abrahamic inheritance.* "We be Abraham's seed." They now claimed the dignity and security of a personal relationship. 2. *We are all too prone (a) to pride ourselves on our external privileges, (b) and it is a danger to souls to rely upon them.*

III. THE PRACTICAL TEST APPLIED TO THIS CLAIM. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." 1. *The child is supposed to bear the ethical stamp of the father's character.* Moral descent is inconsistent with contrariety of action. Abraham was remarkable (1) for his docile acceptance of Divine command, (2) and for his reverence for those angelic messengers who conveyed it. 2. *The Jews practically repudiated their Abrahamic relationship by their conduct.* "But now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard from God." There was an evil gradation in their conduct. (1) They sought to kill Jesus, an innocent Man; (2) a Man divinely commissioned to impart the truth to them; One who was more than a prophet. (3) The truth being not of man, but of God, and therefore challenging universal and unquestioning assent.

IV. OUR LORD ASSERTS A DIFFERENT PARENTAGE FOR THE JEWS. "Ye do the deeds of your father." The Jews begin to discern that a spiritual father is meant, and accordingly shift their ground to meet the new contention of our Lord. 1. *The Jews claim a Divine fatherhood.* "We are not born of fornication; we have but one Father, God." (1) They expressly repudiate any implied imputation of idolatry. They had stood apart for ages from the polytheism of the Gentiles. (2) There is a touch of pride in the assertion of their relation to one Father, even God. Israel was called God's son, his firstborn. To Israel belonged "the adoption" (Rom. iv. 2). 2. *Our Lord manifests the groundlessness of their claim.* "If God were your Father, ye would love me." (1) Spiritual affinity would necessitate this love to the Father's Son and the Father's Prophet. Love to Christ is always implanted in regeneration. Love is one of

the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. v. 22). (2) This love is grounded on a twofold consideration: (a) of Christ's Divine Sonship and his incarnation—"For I proceeded forth and came from God;" and (b) of his mission as Mediator—"Neither came I of myself, but he sent me." Had the Jews loved Christ, they would have recognized the Divine character of his Person and his work. 3. *Our Lord explains their ignorance of his language.* "Why do ye not recognize my language? Because ye cannot understand my Word." (1) They lacked the organ of spiritual discernment. (2) They were under an influence that made them deaf to the voice of truth.

V. OUR LORD ASSERTS THE TRUE PARENTAGE OF THE JEWS WITHOUT DISGUISE. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye desire to do." 1. *It was an act of courage as well as faithfulness to make such an assertion.* 2. *It was an assertion founded on truth,* for it was justified by a right interpretation of their conduct. The Jews manifested the two traits of the devil's character—hatred of man and aversion to the truth. Let men pretend what they will, their conduct must be taken as the test of their character. 3. *The character here assigned to the Jews is not due to the parent, but to the children;* for they "desired to do the lusts of their father."

VI. THE PORTRAIT OF THE DEVIL. "He has been a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." 1. *The words imply that the devil is an evil spirit, and not a mere personification of evil.* 2. *The existence of the devil is no more inconsistent with the holiness or goodness of God than the existence of evil men on earth.* 3. *There are two characteristics of the devil.* (1) He is a murderer. (a) He brought death into the world by his subtlety and falsehood (2 Cor. xi. 3). (b) He has had a long history as a murderer. His first act was in Paradise. He instigated Cain's murder of his brother. He prompted the act of Judas Iscariot to secure the death of Christ. He still tempts sinners to their destruction. (2) He is an enemy to the truth. (a) Because he fell from the truth himself, and from that holiness that marks the realm of truth. (b) The reason of his fall is his utter falseness. "There is no truth in him." He does not dwell in the sphere of truth, because he is subjectively out of all sympathy and relation to it. (c) The effect of his falseness. "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh from his own resources: for he is a liar, and the father of the liar." (a) The devil, in contrast with the Holy Spirit, who speaketh not of himself, but of the things given him of God, elaborates his lies out of the immense storehouse of his own creative ingenuity. (b) He was the first liar, as he was the first murderer; he was a liar first, because by his lies he deceived our first parents to their destruction. He was the first author of a lie. The first lie, "Thou shalt not surely die," was uttered by the devil. (c) He is the father of a large family—he is "the father of the liar"—a character (i.) full of deceit, (ii.) odious to God and man, (iii.) doomed to feel the bitterness of distrust in this life, (iv.) and to be "cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. xx. 10).

VII. THE PROOF OF THE DEVIL'S INFLUENCE OVER THE JEWISH MIND. "And as for me, because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." 1. *As the opposition between Christ and the devil is the opposition between truth and falsehood,* it manifests itself in the children of the two respectively. 2. *If Jesus had spoken falsehood, the Jews would have believed him.* 3. *The unbelief of the Jews had a moral ground.* It is true psychologically to speak of "the evil heart of unbelief." 4. *Christ's moral conduct afforded no suggestion unfavourable to the truth of his doctrine.* "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (1) This was a bold challenge to a nation of fault-finders. He was in their eyes a glutton and a winebibber, a blasphemer and a deceiver of the people. (2) Had Jesus been merely a pre-eminently holy man, he would have been the first to discover and acknowledge his sin. (3) As the Son of God he was essentially sinless, and incapable of sinning. 5. *The unreasonableness of continued unbelief.* "And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" If I am no sinner, and nothing in my conduct injures the purity of my testimony to the truth, you are still more obstinately unreasonable in refusing to believe me. 6. *The final explanation of Jewish unbelief.* "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (1) The true genesis of spiritual docility. The child of God listens with delight to his Father's voice; he has ears to hear and a heart to understand. (2) The true genesis of obstinate unbelief. Those who refused to hear God were not "of God"—not his children, though they might be Abraham's seed, but rather children of the

devil. (3) Our Lord's words imply that the Jews were all along responsible for their unbelief.

Vers. 48—50.—*The indignant retort of the Jews.* Our Lord's last words inflamed their spirits beyond endurance.

I. THEIR INSOLENT RETORT. "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" 1. *The words suggest that they regarded Jesus as their national enemy, estranged from the hopes of Israel, and withal a rejecter of the full revelation made by God.* The term "Samaritan" was always used by the Jews in an insulting sense. 2. *The imputation that he had a devil implied that he was a fanatic and misguided enthusiast, influenced by essentially evil principles.*

II. OUR LORD'S REPLY TO THE RETORT. "I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me." 1. *Jesus takes no notice of the imputation of his Samaritanism.* That was pure insult, for the Jews knew that he was a Galileean. "He, when he was reviled, reviled not again, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. ii. 23). He teaches soon after that a Samaritan may be more truly a child of God than either priest or Levite. He thus makes light of the distinction of race which breathed so largely in Jewish conceptions. 2. *He denies the imputation that he has a devil,* because it was important to assure them that his words were those, not of wild or dark fanaticism, but of truth and soberness. 3. *The true motive of his mission is not hatred to the Jews, but the honour due to his Father.* 4. *The union of Father and Son involved, through their faithless attitude, a deep dishonour to himself;* for by refusing to honour the Father, they withheld the honour due to him, who is the Son and the Sent of the Father. 5. *Yet the insults offered to himself would be divinely judged.* "And I seek not mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth." (1) The affronts were of no account to himself. (2) They were God's concern, who would in due time punish the calumniators of his Son. The allusion may be primarily to the destruction of Jerusalem, which would subvert the whole external framework of Judaism and inflict unparalleled sufferings and indignities upon the Jews, and, ultimately, to the day of final judgment.

Vers. 51—59.—*Deliverance of the believer from death.* The dialogue now takes a new turn.

I. THE BLESSED PROMISE MADE TO THE OBEDIENT DISCIPLE. "If a man keep my Word, he shall never see death." He evidently now addresses those Jews who believe in him. 1. *The character of discipleship.* It (1) receives the gospel in love, (2) obeys it from the heart, and (3) holds it fast as a precious treasure of comfort. 2. *The blessed destiny of discipleship.* (1) There will be no experience of spiritual death, (2) or of eternal death; (3) and physical death will be no penal evil, but robbed of its sting through him who has given us the victory (1 Cor. xv. 57).

II. FRESH MISAPPREHENSION OF THE JEWS. "Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? whom makest thou thyself?" 1. *The Jews argued that Abraham and the prophets had kept God's Word, yet were not exempted from the bitter experience of death.* Therefore the declaration of Jesus seemed to prove his utter self-delusion. 2. *Their question "Art thou greater than our father Abraham?" implies that they refused to regard Jesus as the Messiah, or as the Son of God, or even as a divinely sent Prophet.*

III. JESUS DECLARES THERE IS NO COMPARISON BETWEEN ABRAHAM AND HIMSELF. "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God." 1. *The question of the relative dignity of himself and Abraham is not due to any personal ambition on his part, but in obedience to the will of his Father.* 2. *His higher dignity was due to his complete knowledge of his Father, and his perfect obedience to his will.* 3. *The true relation of Abraham to Christ.* "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." (1) Comparison of personal dignity was therefore out of the question. (2) Abraham, as a man of faith, saw the historic manifestation of Christ through the vista of two thousand years. Faith was, indeed, to him "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." He was pre-eminently "strong in faith" (Rom. iv. 20),

(3) The sight of Christ inspired him with holy joy for the blessings the Redeemer was to bring (a) to himself, (b) to the Jews, (c) to the world. 4. *The joy of Abraham contrasts strangely with the hatred and malice excited by the visible presence of the same Redeemer among Abraham's descendants.*

IV. A FRESH MISAPPREHENSION OF OUR LORD'S WORDS. "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" 1. *The Jews did not believe in Christ's pre-existence.* He was only the Son of Joseph and Mary. 2. *His allusion to his age exaggerates the actual years of his life,* probably because, as "the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," he had aged fast in the hard stress of daily anxieties, caused by the increasing signs of Jewish hostility. 3. *Our Lord's answer is an explicit revelation of his Divinity.* "Before Abraham was, I am." (1) The words imply that there was a time when Abraham was not, but there never was a time when the Son of God was not. (2) They imply more than the anteriority of Jesus to Abraham, for he does not say, "Before Abraham was, I was." (3) They imply Christ's timeless existence—"I am." He is the eternal Son of God. He was, and is, and shall be, the Life of man, because he lives with an absolute life (ch. xiv. 19), and believers may therefore rejoice in him as their Life. "Because I live, ye shall live also."

V. EFFECT OF THIS DECLARATION UPON THE JEWS. "Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple." 1. *The Jews at last understood the meaning of our Lord's words.* 2. *Their attempt to stone him implied their definite rejection of him.* 3. *Jesus placed himself at once out of their reach, as "his time was not yet come."*

#### HOMILIES BY VARIOUS AUTHORS.

Vers. 1—11.—*The accusers condemned and the accused absolved.* Whatever view be taken of the genuineness of this passage of the Gospel, there can be little doubt as to the authenticity of the narrative, and no doubt as to the justice of the picture it presents of the ministry and character of Jesus Christ.

I. HERE IS A REPRESENTATION OF THE SINFUL SOCIETY IN WHICH THE SAVIOUR DESIGNED TO MIX. The scene was the temple; the company gathered together were composed of those who wished to hear Jesus discourse, the motive of some being good, and that of others evil; the centre of the group was the Prophet of Nazareth, who claimed to be the world's Light and Salvation. The audience and the Speaker were interrupted by an incident which, however, afforded a remarkable opportunity for most characteristic and memorable teaching on the part of our Divine Lord. 1. We see a picture of human *frailty*. As the poor, trembling, shame-stricken woman was dragged into the temple precincts, she furnished a sad instance of the moral weakness of humanity. For although her seducer was probably a hundredfold guiltier than she, it cannot be questioned that the adulteress was to blame, as having infringed both Divine and human laws. 2. We see a picture of human *ensoriousness*. Sinful though the woman was, it does not seem that those who were so anxious to overwhelm her with disgrace were impelled by a sense of duty. They seem to have been of those who delight in another's sin, who, instead of covering a fault, love to drag it into the light. 3. We see a picture of human *malice*. They sought to entrap Jesus into some utterance which might serve as a charge against him. It was impelled by this motive that they referred the case of the adulteress to him, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. Their concern for the public morals was trifling when compared with their malignant hatred of him who was morality incarnate.

II. HERE IS A REPRESENTATION OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SAVIOUR DEALT WITH HUMAN SIN. 1. He convinced the morally hardened and insensible, arousing their conscience, and compelling them to admit their own sinfulness. If the cunning of the Pharisees was great, the wisdom of the Saviour was greater still. He confounded their plot, and turned their weapons against themselves. Their own consciences witnessed against those who had been so anxious to condemn a fellow-sinner. 2. He pardoned the penitent offender. The woman could not but feel how heinous had been her transgression, and in how black colours it appeared to all who considered it aright. And all we know of Jesus assures us that he would never have forgiven, and dismissed in peace,

one insensible of sin. She sorrowed over her fault; the presence of the pure and perfect Jesus was itself a rebuke and reproach to her, while his demeanour and language awakened her gratitude and restored her hopes, if not her self-respect. 3. He condemned and guarded against a repetition of the sin, in the admonition he pointedly addressed to her as she left him, "Sin no more."—T.

**Ver. 12.—The world's true Light.** Whether this figurative language was suggested by the morning sun, as it rose in the east over the crown of Olivet, or by the great lamps which were, during the Feast of Tabernacles, kindled in the temple court at evening, in either case its appropriateness and beauty are manifest.

**I. THIS SIMILITUDE EXHIBITS THE GLORY AND POWER OF CHRIST IN HIS OWN NATURE.** Light is a form of universal force, proceeding from the sun, the vast reservoir of power, and acting by the motion of the ethereal medium in wave-like vibrations. Artificial light is only the same force stored up in the earth, and liberated for purposes of illumination. The sun may therefore be regarded as, for us, the centre and source of all light. By its rays we know the glories and beauties of earth and sea; and to them we are indebted, not only for knowledge, but for much enjoyment and for many practical advantages. If, then, anything created and material can serve as an emblem of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, this majestic luminary may well fulfil this purpose. He who first said, "Let there be light!" gave to mankind the great Sun of Righteousness who has arisen upon the world. None but the Divine Lord and Saviour of mankind could justly claim to be "the Light of the world."

**II. THIS SIMILITUDE EXHIBITS THE BLESSINGS WHICH CHRIST BRINGS TO THE WORLD.** 1. The world of humanity is in the darkness of *ignorance*, and the Lord Jesus brings to it heavenly knowledge. Christ is the true Light, instructing men who are very ignorant of God, of his designs of mercy, of the prospects of the future, and indeed of everything that is most important for man as a spiritual being to be acquainted with. 2. The world of humanity is in the darkness of *sin*, and the Lord Jesus brings to it the light of forgiveness and holiness. As when a dark dungeon is thrown open, so that the sunlight streams into it; so was it with the world when Christ came to the dark places of the earth, and irradiated them with his holy presence. They who sometime were darkness now became light in the Lord. 3. The world of humanity lay in the darkness of *death*; the Lord Jesus brought to it the light of life. Vitality is hindered by darkness, and is fostered by daylight; the plant which is pale and sickly in the cellar grows green and healthy when exposed to the sunshine. Mankind when in sin are liable to spiritual death. Christ introduces the principle of spiritual vitality, and they who partake of it, and pass from darkness into glorious light, bear in abundance the blossom of piety and the fruit of obedience. 4. The world of humanity is in darkness and *danger*; the Lord Jesus brings the light of safety. He is a Lamp to guide the searchers, a Lantern to light upon the path of safety, a Torch to those who explore the cavern, a Pharos to those who sail the stormy seas, a Harbour-light to guide into the haven of peace, a Pole-star to direct the wanderer's course, a Pillar of fire to light the nation's desert march. So our Saviour warns men of spiritual perils, directs their steps into spiritual safety, directs in circumstances of difficulty and perplexity, brings to eternal peace.

**III. THE SIMILITUDE REMINDS US OF OUR DUTY WITH REFERENCE TO CHRIST.** 1. To admire and adore the light. The old Persians worshipped the rising sun; Christians may well worship their glorious Lord. 2. To walk in the light. Let it be remembered that the sun shines in vain for those who conceal themselves from his beams; and that even to admire is not enough, if we fail to make use of the heavenly shining to guide our steps aright.

"Thou Sun of our day, thou Star of our night,  
We walk by thy ray, we live in thy light;  
Oh shine on us ever, kind, gracious, and wise,  
And nowhere and never be hid from our eyes."

T.

**Ver. 25.—"Who art thou?"** The startling and authoritative language in which the Lord Jesus, in conversation and discussion with the unfriendly Jews of Jerusalem,

spoke both of himself and of them, not unnaturally prompted this blunt yet pertinent inquiry.

**I. THE QUESTION.** The spirit in which this inquiry is urged makes all the difference as to the light in which it must be regarded. 1. It may be a spirit of mere idle curiosity. 2. It may be a spirit of historical inquiry, such as on the part of one for the first time brought into contact with Jesus would be becoming. 3. It may be prompted by perplexity and doubt. Many in our own day have listened first to one and then to another explanation of our Lord's nature and mission, until their minds have been utterly bewildered, and they know not what to think of him. It is well that such disturbed souls should repair to the Lord himself, and, neglecting all that men say of him, should seriously and earnestly put to him the question, "Who art thou?" 4. Some put this question for the satisfaction of their spiritual needs. Quickened from spiritual deadness, and alive to their own inability to save themselves, such earnest inquirers repair to Christ in the hope of finding in him a Divine Saviour and Friend. From their burdened, anxious heart comes the entreaty for a gracious revelation. Not so much to solve a speculative doubt, as to satisfy a practical necessity and inner craving, they come to Jesus with the imploring cry, "Who art thou?"

**II. THE REPLY OF THE REFLECTING OBSERVER.** Inattention, prejudice, malice, may in various ways answer the question proposed; but none of these answers can be deemed worthy of our consideration. But the candid student of Christ's character and life comes to conclusions which, though in themselves incomplete and insufficient, are, as far as they go, credible and reasonable. 1. Jesus is the faultless, blameless Man, the holiest and the meekest of whom human history bears record. He alone could in conscious innocence make the appeal, "Who of you convicteth me of sin?" 2. Jesus is the perfect Model of benevolence and devotedness to the welfare of others. He "went about doing good;" and his ministry was not only a rebuke to human selfishness, it was an inspiration to self-denying beneficence. Thus much even the student of Jesus' character, who does not acknowledge his Divinity, will be prepared to concede, and will perhaps be forward to maintain. But the Christian goes further than this.

**III. THE REPLY OF THE BELIEVING DISCIPLE.** Such a one takes the answers which Jesus gave in the course of his ministry, as they are recorded by the evangelists, and deems our Lord's witness to himself worthy of all acceptance. Thus his reply is that of Christ himself. Proceeding upon this principle, the Christian believes Jesus to be: 1. The Son of God, who, according to his own statements, stood in a relation to the Father altogether unique. 2. The Saviour and Friend of man, who gave his life a ransom for many, dying that men might live in God for ever. 3. The Lord and Judge of the moral universe, empowered and commissioned to reign until all foes shall be beneath his feet.—T.

**Ver. 31.—"My disciples."** Teaching and learning are the condition alike of the intellectual and of the moral life of humanity. All men who live do both, and good men do both well. Of the scholar of Oxenford, Chaucer says, "And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach." Christianity, being a Divine religion, accepts and adapts itself to this condition of our existence.

**I. THE MASTER.** Christ was acknowledged to be a Hebrew Rabbi, even a Prophet. But the enlightened knew him to be the Teacher and the Master of mankind. Witness his ministry, his sermons, his parables, his conversations and discourses. As a Master, he was wise, winning, patient. His vocation of teaching he continues to fulfil through human history. He is still and ever teaching men who are prepared to learn from him. And those who know him first as Teacher, come to know him afterwards in the other great mediatorial offices he sustains to man.

**II. THE SCHOLARS.** As the Pharisees had their disciples, and as John had his, so the Prophet of Nazareth gathered around him those who were docile and sympathetic, and communicated to them his truth, and bestowed upon them his spirit. Thus the twelve, the seventy, learned of him. Wherever Jesus went, he made disciples: women, as the woman of Samaria and Mary of Bethany; scholars, as Nicodemus; persons counted socially inferior, as Zacchæus. After our Lord's ascension, "disciples" became a common designation of Christian people, as much as "saints" or "brethren." It justly remains such throughout this spiritual dispensation.



III. THE LESSONS. Christ himself has always been his own chief Lesson, far greater than any words can embody and convey. This appears from his own language, "Learn of me," and from the apostolic appeal, "Ye have not so learned Christ." His character and his Word are truth. In Christ his disciples learn (1) to *believe* aright regarding God, man, eternity; and, what is even greater, (2) to *do*, viz. to acquire the practical lessons of righteousness, fortitude, and patience, etc. Who has mastered Christ's teaching? Who has thoroughly learned his lessons? Who has completely drunk into his spirit?

IV. THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP. 1. Lowly, as regards ourselves, the learners. 2. Reverent, as regards him, the Teacher. 3. Diligent and persistent, as regards the lessons to be acquired. 4. Interested and appreciative, sympathetic and receptive.

V. THE CULTURE OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP. Learning is a means to an end. To what end is Christian discipleship the means? To what discipline of blessing do Christ's pupils attain? 1. The culture of *knowledge*—Divine and precious knowledge. 2. The culture of *character*—Christ-likeness. 3. The culture which qualifies for *usefulness*. As school and college fit a youth for business or professional life, so Christ's discipline qualifies for Christian service. 4. The culture for *immortality*. This is Christ's school; above is Christ's home, the scene of perfect service and of lasting joy.—T.

Ver. 36.—*Spiritual freedom*. Our Lord Christ, who brings truth to the understanding and love to the heart, brings also the highest freedom to the active nature and life of man, and thus secures the prevalence of holiness, of willing and cheerful obedience to God.

I. THE BONDAGE IS PRESUMED WHICH RENDERS NECESSARY THE ADVENT OF THE DIVINE LIBERATOR. Man is by nature, whilst in this fallen state, under bondage to law, to sin, to condemnation.

II. PRETENDED FREEDOM, OF WHICH SINFUL MEN ARE FOUND TO BOAST, IS EXPOSED. The Jewish leaders, our Lord's contemporaries, asserted a certain liberty. Relying upon their descent from Abraham, and their consequent privileges in connection with the old covenant, the Jews claimed to be free men. The worst cases of bondage are those where there is the pretence of liberty, and nothing but the pretence. Free-thinkers, free-livers, are names given to classes who are utter strangers to real liberty, who are in the most degrading bondage to error and to lust.

III. TRUE FREEDOM IS EXPLAINED. 1. It is deliverance from spiritual chains and bondage. 2. It is liberty which reveals itself in the willing choice of the highest and noblest service. They are spiritually free who recognize the supreme claims of the Divine Law, who evince a preference for the will of God above their own pleasure or the example of their fellow-men.

IV. THE SON OF GOD DECLARES HIMSELF THE DIVINE LIBERATOR. As such he has all the requisite authority, and all the requisite wisdom and grace. Political freedom may be secured by a human deliverer; but in order to enfranchise the soul a Divine interposition is necessary. Christ has the mastery of all spiritual forces, and can accordingly set free the bound and trammelled soul. He smites the tyrant who lords it over the spiritual captives; he cancels our sentence of slavery; he breaks our fetters; he calls us freemen, and treats us as such; he animates us with the spirit of liberty.

V. THE BLESSED RESULTS OF FREEDOM ARE PROMISED. The enfranchised from Satan's service become God's willing bondmen. Then, from being God's servants, they become his sons. As his sons, they are his heirs, and being such, they in due time enjoy the inheritance. This is liberty indeed—to pass from thralldom unto Satan into the "glorious liberty of the sons of God."—T.

Ver. 46.—*The sinlessness of Christ*. Had our Lord Jesus been guilty of sin (the very thought is to a Christian mind inexpressibly shocking!), he could not have been all that he actually is to us. As God manifest in the flesh, as the ideal Man, as the all-sufficient Saviour, Christ must needs have been without sin.

I. THE WITNESS OF MEN TO OUR LORD'S SINLESSNESS. 1. That of his friends and

apostles. Peter designated him "the Holy One and the Just," "who did no sin;" John, "Jesus Christ the righteous," of whom he says, "In him was no sin." Paul, writing to the Corinthians, speaks of Christ as of him "who knew no sin;" and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to him in these words, "Though without sin." 2. That of others. Thus Judas, his betrayer, spoke of the "innocent blood" he had been the means of shedding; Pilate found "no fault in him;" the centurion testified, "This was a righteous Man."

II. OUR LORD'S OWN ASSERTIONS CLAIMING THE PREROGATIVE OF SINLESSNESS. Jesus said, "I have kept my Father's commandments;" "The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me;" "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" If he were not sinless, either his hypocrisy must have been frightful, or he must have been the subject of the most monstrous delusion that ever possessed an egotistical fanatic.

III. AS A MATTER OF FACT AND HISTORY, OUR LORD'S LIFE WAS SINLESS. 1. Regard the matter negatively. Was there one of the ten commandments which Jesus broke? From his temptation in the wilderness down to his death upon the cross, he eschewed every evil, and proved himself victorious over every instigation to sin to which others—even good men—would probably in some cases have yielded. 2. Regard the matter positively. There is often presented to men an alternative between vice and virtue, disobedience and obedience to God. Wherever an opportunity occurred for our Lord to do that which was best, he did it. There was unflinching consistency between his teaching and his life; he mixed with sinners, unharmed by the contact; he exhibited all moral excellences in his own character; in holiness he stands supreme and alone among the sons of men.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. 1. This fact points to, and agrees with, a belief in the Divinity of Jesus. 2. Here is a faultless, perfect Example for all men to study and copy. 3. Here is evidence of our Lord's perfect qualification to be the Saviour and the Lord of man.—T.

Ver. 51.—*Obedience and immortality.* The phase of our Lord's ministry brought before us in this part of St. John's Gospel is a combative, a controversial, phase. The Jews were perpetually opposing Christ, carping and cavilling at every work he performed, and almost at every word he uttered. Jesus took up the challenge, and met the objections and the allegations of his enemies. He defied them; he turned upon them with an unanswerable question or a startling paradox. There is not always apparent even an attempt to conciliate his adversaries—to win them over. He did not even stop to explain, when he knew perfectly well that explanation would be unavailing; he left his words to be instructive to the enlightened, and an enigma to the unspiritual.

I. THE CONDITION HERE PROPOUNDED. "If a man keep my word." 1. This implies upon Christ's part a special revelation and authority. By his "word" doubtless Jesus meant the whole manifestation of his character and will; his doctrine relating to the Father and to himself; his precepts relating to his disciples. 2. It implies upon the part of his followers a reverent, loyal, and affectionate obedience. They keep, *i.e.* they retain in memory and observe in practice, the word of their Master. As a faithful servant keeps the word of his lord, as a diligent scholar keeps the word of his teacher, as a loyal soldier keeps the word of his officer, his general, as a reverent son keeps the word of his father, so the Christian keeps the word of his Saviour.

II. THE PROMISE HERE RECORDED. "He shall never see death." 1. The death from which Christ promises exemption is not the death of the body, as was understood by the Jews; it is the spiritual death which is the effect of sin, and which consists in insensibility to everything Divine. This should be more dreaded than physical death. 2. The way in which Christ fulfils this promise. He died in the body that those who believe on him may not experience spiritual death. The redemption of our Saviour is a redemption from death and sin. And Christ communicates the Spirit of life, who quickens dead souls, imparting to them the newness of life which is their highest privilege, and which is the earnest and the beginning of an immortality of blessedness.—T.

Ver. 53.—*Christ's superiority to Abraham.* The honour in which Abraham was held among the Jews who lived in the time of our Lord, is unquestionable. Their

grounds for so honouring him may not be satisfactory. There is little reason for supposing that they appreciated his moral grandeur. Probably there was more of national pride than of religious feeling in their reverence for their great progenitor.

**I. ABRAHAM'S GREATNESS.** That the great sheikh who came from beyond the Euphrates, and who traversed the soil of Palestine with his retinue of dependents and of cattle, was one of the greatest figures in human history, none will deny. But only those who look below the surface can discern the real grounds for holding this patriarch in honour so high. 1. We know, from the Scripture record, that Abraham was the friend of God. Amidst idolaters he was a worshipper of the supreme and only Deity, and was upon terms of peculiar intimacy with Jehovah. 2. He was also the father of the faithful, and that not so much in the sense that he was the ancestor of the nation who worshipped the Eternal alone, but in this sense, viz. that his character and life were in many respects a model of faith. He maintained, on the whole, his confidence in the righteous and faithful Ruler of the universe. 3. He was also the progenitor of many nations, and especially of that one nation whom God set apart to preserve the knowledge of his Name and his Law, and to prepare the way for the advent of the Messiah.

**II. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST.** Our Lord did not question Abraham's greatness, but, upon the occasion on which the words of the text were spoken, he both implicitly and explicitly claimed to be greater even than the ancestor of the chosen people. This superiority consists in: 1. His nature and character. Abraham was the friend of God; Christ was the Son of God. Abraham was great as a man; Christ was distinguished by superhuman greatness. 2. His work for humanity. Abraham set a glorious example of faith; but Christ came to be the Divine Object of faith. Abraham was an intercessor, e.g. for Sodom; Christ was the Advocate of man. Abraham was a great leader; Christ was the great Saviour. 3. In the commonwealth and kingdom which he founded. Abraham was the father of many nations, and is to this day thought of with reverence among Eastern peoples, whilst the Jews, in the time of Jesus, and even now, rejoice in tracing their descent from him. But Christ's kingdom is a universal kingdom, and the Israel of God throughout earth and heaven are called after him. 4. In the perpetuity of his dominion. It annoyed and angered the Jews that Jesus claimed immortality for himself and for his disciples, whilst they were constrained to admit that Abraham was dead. They could not understand Christ's claim, and the time had not come for him to make that claim fully intelligible. But we can see that Abraham was a pilgrim and a stranger upon earth, whilst Christ is an abiding and eternal King!—T.

Vers. 3—11.—*A miserable sinner and a merciful Saviour.* Notice on this occasion—

**I. THE CONDUCT OF HIS ENEMIES.** 1. *It was brutally gross.* (1) It was so to the woman. She was disgraced, and had exposed herself to the odium of her detectives. But this was not enough; they dragged her to the temple, to the presence of a popular Prophet, and exposed to the ridicule of the crowd. This, to any woman, although a sinner, would be painful, but to an Eastern woman it was a real torture, and the conduct of those who treated her thus was gross and unworthy of common humanity. (2) It was so to our Lord. Whatever they might think of him, his public character was blameless. He was a Teacher held in high repute by the multitudes, and taking no higher view at present than this, to take this poor fallen sinner thus publicly before him was grossly indelicate. But think what he really was—the immaculate, purely innocent, and incarnate Son of God, come on a mission of love and mercy, and now in the very act of striving to benefit a multitude of the human family. Such a case, with all its unholy associations, must have grated harshly upon his moral sensibilities, and must be loathsome to his moral taste. 2. *It was utterly hypocritical.* Hypocrisy is to speak or do one thing but mean another. If so, the conduct of these men was utterly hypocritical. (1) They professed great reverence for the Law—for this law which was applicable to adultery. This was only an empty profession. They had long ago ceased to execute it; it was a dead letter as far as they were concerned. (2) They professed great regard for public and private morality. This also was a miserable sham. As the sequel amply proves, they were most immoral themselves. (3) On this occasion they professed great respect for Christ—addressed him as "Master," while in their very hearts

they most bitterly hated him, and this case was a plot to betray him. (4) They professed to be in a *difficulty, and anxious for light and help*. But there was no difficulty whatever. The Law of Moses on the subject was quite explicit, and the woman was guilty according to their own testimony. What more light could they desire? 3. *It was utterly irreligious*. Religion, if it means anything, means true respect for man and profound reverence for God. Their conduct manifested neither, but the very reverse; they made light of an erring soul, and lighter still of a loving Saviour. If they had any reverence for God, the Creator and Father of all, and any true regard for their fellow-creatures, they would lovingly hide the guilt of this fallen woman, and tenderly try to heal and restore her. But so impious and light was their conduct, that they trifled with an erring sister in order to entrap a gracious Saviour. 4. *It was cunningly and maliciously cruel*. It was a cunning and cruel plot to bring Jesus into trouble, into public disrepute, into court, punishment, and if possible into death. Knowing his reputation for forgiveness and tenderness as well as purity, they bring the case of this erring woman before him, satisfied in themselves that it would of necessity bring him as an heretic before the Jewish council, or as a seditionist before the Roman tribunal. It was a cunning and cruel plot, inspired by hatred to destroy him. What they could not do openly they attempted to do clandestinely.

II. THE CONDUCT OF JESUS. His conduct here brings forth certain features of his character into bold relief. 1. *His perfect knowledge*. (1) His knowledge of *inward motives and intentions*. He knew their most hidden and secret thoughts, which could only be known to omniscience. He knew their motives in spite of the outward plausibility and piety of their conduct. Everything which the most cunning hypocrisy could do to hide their real intentions was done; but, in spite of this, all was clear to him. In fact, a great deal of the evangelist's account is only a faithful report of Jesus' secret thought and motive reading. There never was and never will be such a thought-reader as Christ. (2) His knowledge of *real character*. Through the woman's foul pollution and her accusers' professed sanctity, their real character was open to him. Her accusers thought that they could stand the test of the crowd, but little thought that they were under the immediate gaze of an omniscient eye. He could see something worse in the accusers than in the accused. The woman, degraded and guilty as she was, appeared almost innocent by their side. Here Jesus could see. Here, perhaps, Jesus saw the angel of light in the mud of depravity, and certainly the angel of darkness in the garb of light, and murder accusing adultery in court. To the all-seeing eye of Jesus what a scene was presented here! 2. *His consummate wisdom*. This is seen: (1) In his *refusal to act as a legal judge in the case*. There was a strong temptation to this. The case was so stated and the question so framed that escape from the cunning dilemma seemed almost impossible. Had he been caught by it, his enemies would be triumphant; but his unerring wisdom guided his conduct. (2) In *raising the case into a higher tribunal—that of conscience and reason*. Had he dismissed the case with a flat refusal, which he justly might have done, his foes would have some reason to complain and glory; but from a court in which he had no jurisdiction he raised it at once to that of conscience—"the King's bench," where he ever sits and has a right to judge. And this had a crushing effect upon his foes, and his superior wisdom shone with Divine brilliancy. 3. *His supreme power over spiritual forces in man*. (1) His power over *conscience*, even a guilty conscience. He proved here that he could awake it from the sleep of years by the word of his mouth. Although lulled and even seared, yet it recognized at once the voice of its Author and Lord—"He that is without sin," etc. Conscience is true to Christ; the heart is false. (2) The *power of a guilty conscience over its possessor*. There is a striking instance of this here. No sooner conscience awoke than it spoke in thunders and made cowards of them all. It became a horrible whip to lash them, and, self-convicted, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, and when the veterans retired from the attack the younger soon followed. (3) The power of a guilty conscience over its possessor *reveals the power of Jesus over all the spiritual forces in man*. He is the supreme and lawful King of the spiritual empire. He can touch every spiritual power of the soul and rouse it into action, so that man must willingly obey his rightful King or ultimately become his own tormentor. 4. *His pure and burning holiness*. This is seen: (1) In the *attitude he assumed*. "He stooped," etc.—an attitude of silent contempt and of inward and holy

disgust. Like a flower from a cold March wind, his tenderly holy nature naturally shrank from the foul moral atmosphere around him. (2) In his *calm demeanour*. Although quite cognizant of the cunning plot, its malicious design and inspiring hatred, yet he was unruffled. Why was he so calm and self-possessed? Because he was so holy. (3) In his *vindication of the Law*. "He that is without sin of you," etc. The claims of the Law were admitted; it suffered no loss at his hands. (4) In his *condemnation of sin*. That of the woman, and not less that of her accusers. (5) In the *scathing effect of his words on his foes*. Their self-conviction was the sympathy of conscience with the holiness of its Lord. His presence and words became to them unbearable. Fearing another burning sentence or a piercing look, they had left before he had raised himself from the ground; they fled his holy presence as some beasts of prey flee to their dens before the rising sun. They would rather meet the anger of a storm than the pure gaze of that eye. 5. *His Divine tenderness and mercy*. This is seen: (1) In his *conduct towards his enemies*. They were more his foes than those of the woman. They were really the friends of guilt, but foes of innocence. Disgusted as he must have been with them, he treated them very tenderly. He took no advantage of his great superiority. There seems to be a technical error in the charge; this he passed by. Whatever might be the full meaning of his writing on the ground, it certainly meant that he tried to avoid public exposure of their guilt, and to convict them by private correspondence; and failing this, he exposed them in the mildest manner. (2) In his *conduct towards the woman*. Most teachers would be to her harsh and censorious, but he was not. His holiness seemed to have burnt from its very centre and flowed in love and tenderness. Whether this woman was a confirmed sinner or the victim of a stronger and a more sinful nature, it is evident she was sinful and degraded enough. Still he treated her as a woman, though fallen, and respected her remaining sensibilities. His conduct glowed with more than human tenderness, and breathed more than human mercy. "Neither do I condemn thee"—words which probably mean more than a simple refusal to act as a legal judge; but, in consequence of a penitence of heart which no eye could see but his own, they were meant to convey the acquittal of a higher court, and the blessing of Divine pardon. He dismissed her with an honest but a hopeful caution: "Go, and sin no more"—language involving condemnation of the past, but full of hope with regard to the future; and if his advice were acted upon, he would become her Defender and Friend.

LESSONS. 1. *The most depraved and wicked really are the most harsh and censorious*. The servant which has been forgiven a hundred pounds by his master is the most likely to abuse his fellow-servant who owes him fifty. He who has a beam in his own eye is the first to charge his brother with having a mote. The witness-box is more sinful often than that of the criminal. 2. *The most holy are the most merciful*. Jesus was so purely holy that he could afford to be abundantly merciful. He is the foe of sin, but the Friend of sinners. The climax of holiness is love and mercy. 3. *Outward morality may stand the test of a human judge, but not that of the Divine one*. The Law is spiritual; the Judge is omniscient. What is real and immortal in man is spiritual; what he is spiritually he is really to God. Jesus was more tender to tempted and fallen sinners than to self-righteous hypocrites. The former he helped, the latter he denounced. A scar on the skin is more easily cured than cancer on the vitals. The accused fared better than her accusers. 4. *The greater the opposition to Jesus the more brightly his character shone, and the more unfortunate and impenitent sinners are benefited*. The character of Jesus never shone more brightly than in this cunning and dark plot. His superior knowledge, wisdom, authority, holiness, and mercy shone so brilliantly that in the fiery furnace we see One not like unto, but the very Son of man and the very Son of God; and the poor woman derived a great advantage. On the tide of hatred she was carried into the lap of infinite love, and by the seething wave of human vindictiveness she was thrown into the warm embrace of Divine forgiveness. 5. *The sinner and the Saviour are best alone*. Jesus alone, and the woman in the midst. Spell-bound by his authority, and more by the secret and magic influence of his Divine compassion, she stood still. Her accusers all were gone, and she was the only one that remained in the Divine society—a dumb suppliant at his feet. No one should go between the sinner and the Saviour, between the sick and the Physician. Let them alone. A sound advice will be given, and eternal benefit derived.—B. T.

Ver. 12.—*The Light of the world.* Our Lord was now in the temple. A crowd was around him. It was early in the morning. The sun rose over Olivet and looked through the porticoes of the temple on its Creator teaching the people within. The sun is an old and eminent missionary of God in nature. It was as seraphic and ready to convey new ideas and truths now as ever. The people naturally turned to greet its appearance. Our Lord took advantage of the occurrence to reveal himself as the world's Light. What the sun is to the physical world, he is to the moral. "I am the Light," etc. Notice—

I. CHRIST AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. "I am," etc. This implies: 1. *That the world was morally dark.* It became so by the early sin of its first inhabitants. Its moral condition was like that of its physical at the beginning—without form and void, and darkness brooding on the face of the abyss. It deviated from its original and proper centre, and wandered into moral gloom; it became spiritually ignorant of God, of immortality, and of its highest good, spiritually impure, depraved and dead, lying in wickedness, and in the valley of the shadow of death. 2. *That Christ became its Light.* "I am," etc. He is the physical Light of the world. The sun is but the dazzle of his presence, the stars are but the smiles of his face, and the day is but the placid light of his countenance. He is the mental Light of the world. Intellect and reason are the emanations of his genius. If he hides his face, they are eclipsed; if he withdrew his support, they would be extinguished. He is the spiritual Light of the world, the Light of the heart and conscience. By the Incarnation he is specially the spiritual Light of the world. He is the Sun of the spiritual empire. (1) He is the Source and Medium of *spiritual knowledge*. He is the Revealer of God and man, their mutual relationships, and the way of access to and peace with him. He sheds full light upon every subject which pertains to the highest well-being of the human race. (2) He is the Source and Medium of *spiritual holiness*. Light is an emblem of purity. Jesus is the Medium and Source of man's sanctification. His life was an embodiment of purity. His character was spotless, his doctrines and Spirit are sanctifying, his example is pure and leads the soul upwards, and his life is still like the perfume of heavenly roses, making even the air of our world fragrant. (3) He is the Source and Medium of *spiritual life*. Light is life, and life is light. "In him was life, and the life was the Light of men." "He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He brought life and immortality to light, and by faith they are communicated to men. 3. *That he is the only true Light of the world.* (1) He is the *only original and independent Source of Divine light*. In the solar system there are many stars and planets, but only one sun, from which all the other bodies derive their light. John the Baptist was a bright and shining light. The prophets, apostles, and reformers through the ages were shining luminaries, but they only reflected the light they borrowed from him who is the Light of the world. He is the great and only inexhaustible and independent Source of light, of spiritual knowledge, purity, and life. He is not the stream, but the Fountain; not a borrower of light, but its original Source. "He is the true Light." (2) He is the *world's Light naturally and essentially*. By virtue of the divinity of his Person and mission, by his eternal fitness, voluntary choice, and Divine election. His advent was no intrusion upon the order of this world, and created no jarring in the system of things, but naturally fitted in. Without him, all would be discord; with him, all will be harmony; and when his influence will be fully felt, earth and heaven will be filled with the sweetest music. His incarnation was natural, like the rising sun and the consequent day. 4. *That he is specially the Light of this our world.* As God, he is the Light of all worlds and systems—they all revolve around his eternal throne, and receive their light and life from his Presence; but as God-Man he is peculiarly the Light of this world. This world is a platform on which the Almighty has acted a special part, taught special lessons, performed a special work, and shone with special brilliancy. But far be it from us to limit the influence of the incarnate life of Jesus. We know not to what extent what he did in our world affected even thrones, principalities, and powers; how high or low or wide the "It is finished!" echoed. It may affect, and probably does affect, the remotest confines of his vast empire; but enough it is for us to know that he is the Light of this world. In this comparatively small mansion of his Father's house the matchless drama of Divine mercy was acted, and here Divine love blazed in sacrifice, and in our sky "the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his

wings." 5. *That he is the Light of the whole of this world.* Not of a part of it, not of a certain number, but of the whole human family. There is no sun for Europe, and another for Asia; but one sun for the world, and one is sufficient. Jesus is the one Light of the moral world, and he is enough. As a Prophet, the whole human family may sit at his feet at the same time and be taught of him; as a King, his sceptre ruleth over all; as a High Priest, he holds the world in his arms, and successfully pleads for it. The sacrifice he presents is for the whole world, and it is sufficient; the world's prayers may ascend in the incense and be answered. He has given "the heathen for his inheritance," etc. He is the world's Light, and it has a right to him. 6. *That this is a well-attested fact.* (1) *Attested by the testimony of Christ himself.* "I am," etc. He bears record of himself, but his record is true. If he bore not record of himself, who would or could? His bearing record of himself was a simple necessity. Who could relate the story of him whose goings forth have been from eternity, but he himself? He knew what no human being could know, and he was too intelligent to mistake, too pure in character to deceive, and too great to overrate himself. When we speak of ourselves we are in danger of overrating ourselves. But Jesus could not make himself greater than he was; he made himself less—made himself of no reputation. He bore record of himself. The sun does this. It is a witness to itself, and says, "I am the light of the world," by filling it at the same time with a flood of radiance. Jesus did the same, bringing life and immortality to light. (2) *Attested by the observation and experience of others.* The presence of the sun is attested by a thousand eyes. During the ministry of our Lord the multitudes basked in his light. The physically and spiritually blind saw the light, and to them who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death arose a great light, and all saw that had eyes to see. (3) *It is an ever-increasingly attested fact.* It became more evident with the increasing light of the Lord and the increasing capacity of mankind to comprehend and enjoy him. He shone in his pure and loving life, his gracious words, his mighty and benevolent deeds, and especially in his self-sacrificing death. True, the Sun of Righteousness was eclipsed on Golgotha; but it was only partial and temporary. If it was dark on this, it was light on the other side. If the women wept, mercy and truth met in loving embrace and smiled above the sacrifice, and the Divine throne was encircled with a wreath of saving radiance. So light it was that the blind thief was restored to sight and saw a kingdom, and from the gloom of death the Sun of Righteousness rose into its meridian splendour, and through succeeding ages it has shone with ever-increasing brilliancy. The evidence of Christ being the Light of the world daily grows stronger, and will soon be complete in a world filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

II. CHRIST AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IN THE CONDITIONS OF ITS ENJOYMENT AND BLESSINGS. 1. *In its conditions.* The enjoyment of all mercies is conditional. The simple existence of light will not ensure its enjoyment. It has conditions. The condition of enjoying the Light of the world is to follow Christ. This involves: (1) *The soul being within the sphere of his attraction and light.* This involves knowledge, faith, obedience, discipleship, to sit at his feet and learn of him, acknowledgment of his leadership, and impressibility to his influence. (2) *Consecration of soul to him.* The earth's enjoyment of the light and heat of the sun depends upon its position in relation to that luminary. This makes its spring and summer. The enjoyment of Christ by the soul depends upon its attitude in relation to him. This attitude should be one of entire consecration, self-surrender, prayer, and yearning for his guidance and inspiration. The face of the soul should be turned right towards him. This will make its summer and spring. (3) *A continually progressive movement in his direction.* To follow means progress. The soul cannot be stationary and follow Christ, but it must ever press forward and upward in the direction of his example, character, life, Spirit, and glory. 2. *In its blessings.* (1) *The avoidance of darkness.* "Shall not walk," etc. What a blessing it is to avoid physical darkness, especially in its permanency and progress! To be in it for a while is bad enough, but to walk in it is worse still—dangerous and miserable. To follow Christ is a sure exemption from spiritual darkness, ignorance, vice, and death, and their terrible consequences, misery and hell. There may be clouds and shadows arising from the imperfection of the following, from the native gloom of the soul, or perhaps from the effulgence of the light; but these will only be temporary. The follower of Christ can never be long in dark-

ness. (2) *Enjoyment of light.* "The Light of life." Without life there is no light. The Divine life is the parent of every light, from the least to the greatest—physical, mental, and spiritual light. The follower of Jesus shall have light from him who is the Life, which produces and supports life, and leads to life, the highest life, the spiritual life of the soul, enjoyed here and to be enjoyed hereafter under the most advantageous and permanent circumstances, which will result in the most exquisite happiness and the most ecstatic delights.

LESSONS. 1. *Jesus was the greatest or the most selfish and deceptive the world ever saw.* The world has had its philosophers and poets, men of learning and sages, but none of them professed to have more light than was sufficient to see the gloom within and without, and to sigh for more light; but here is a carpenter's Son, saying with the greatest confidence and naturalness to a mixed audience in the gorgeous temple of his country, "I am the Light of the world." He could not be selfish and deceptive. This would be diametrically opposed to his whole life and character. He must be what he professed to be, for there is light. The evidence of the ages is on his side. For upwards of eighteen centuries, none have eclipsed him and none have approached him, only a few of his most eminent followers. 2. *Although the Light of the world, yet he is the Light of every individual soul.* He is great enough to be the Light of the world, yet his rays are subtle enough to enter every human heart and conscience. Angels may for ever learn of him, but Mary may sit at his feet. Bright seraphim bask and blaze in his light, still his gentle beams will cheer the lowly heart and contrite spirit. 3. *Being the Light of the world, its destiny is very hopeful.* In spite of darkness, ignorance, vice, death, and misery, we may well hope for better things. "Through the shadows of the globe we sweep into a younger day." 4. *Being the Light of the world and of life, let the world and life have their own.* Let not the world, let no human life, grope in darkness for want of light. Through enlightened souls alone can the light of Christ be transmitted to the world; if we are enlightened, it is our duty to bear the light abroad. 5. *Being the Light of the world, it is the solemn duty of the world to follow him.* The only way to avoid darkness. Apart from Christ there is no light but the weird flames of misery and lurid fires of torture. Follow him, and all the dark circumstances of life will be radiant; follow him, and the valley of the shadow of death will become bright as day, and introductory to a day without a cloud or ending.—B. T.

Vers. 31, 32.—*True Christian discipleship.* I. IN ITS CONDITIONS. These are: 1. *The possession of Christ's Word.* (1) The possession of his Word is *necessary to faith in him.* The Word of Christ reveals him to faith—reveals his mind, his thoughts, his heart, his will, his character and mission. His Word is as an instrument—is the generator of faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing," etc. It is the great medium of communication between Christ and faith, and the means by which faith transforms Christ into the soul. It is the nutriment, strength, and the life of faith. (2) Faith in Christ is *necessary to discipleship.* Christian discipleship begins with faith in Christ. This is its lowest condition and first grade. These Jews were disciples because they had a certain degree of faith in Christ; but they were weak disciples, their faith being weak and young—they were infant scholars. But they could not be even this without a degree of faith, and faith comes from the Word. (3) His Word is the *great disciplinary instrument of his school.* It contains the lessons taught by him and learnt by the disciples. All illumination, knowledge, inspiration, moral and spiritual training, and progress, are attained through his Word. In his Word the disciples meet and find him. (4) His Word must be *possessed in its fulness and purity.* "My Word." It must be Christ's Word, pure and simple, and the whole of his Word, without any addition, subtraction, or admixture. Any of these will affect the discipleship, make it incomplete or unreal. 2. *A vital possession of Christ's Word.* The possession is not merely outward and intellectual, but inward and spiritual. The Word must be in the soul, and the soul in the Word. Christ is in the Christian, and the Christian is in Christ. Christ's Word is in his disciple, and the disciple is in his Word. Both mean the same, only in the latter prominence is given to the Word. This implies: (1) *The closest union between the soul and the Word.* The Word is in the soul, and the soul is in the Word. The union between the body and soul is not as near, real, and lasting. It is like the union between the Divine Son and the Father. (2) *The Word as the subject of the most*



*devoted study.* The disciple, heart and soul, is in it. It is his meditation in the day and his song in the night; so attractive it is that it has stolen away all the thoughts and affections, and become their centre and the source of their most exquisite delight. (3) The *object of implicit faith.* "In my Word." The whole soul, with its eternal concerns, rests upon it with childlike confidence, and trusts in it with more implicitness than even the farmer and the mariner trust the laws of nature. (4) The *object of absolute obedience.* It is not merely the object of faith and trust, but of obedience. Its authority is fully recognized, its directions minutely followed, and its commands strictly and joyfully obeyed. It is the polar star of the soul and the absolute law of life, and the disciple is its willing and happy slave. 3. *An abiding possession of Christ's Word.* "If ye abide," etc. (1) This is an essential condition of a *permanent union with Christ.* Without union with Christ, there can be no discipleship. Without abiding in his Word, there can be no true union with him. If the Word be forsaken or deviated from, the chief connecting chain between the disciple and the Master is broken. (2) This is an essential condition of *reality of discipleship.* "If ye abide," etc. There may be discipleship without continuance in Christ's Word, but it is not real, only nominal. Such are temporary disciples, not disciples indeed. Abiding, firmness, and perseverance in Christ's Word are essential features and conditions of reality. What is real is abiding. The presence or absence of this abiding feature of faith is perceived by Christ from the first, but must be manifested by the conduct of the disciple. (3) This is an essential condition of the *perfection of Christian discipleship.* It is progressive. The Word progresses in the soul, and the soul in the Word. As the soul abides in the Word, it is admitted from stage to stage to the society and confidence of Christ, and attains the perfection of discipleship by likeness to the Master. (4) As a condition of *true discipleship, it is certain.* There is an "if" with regard to the condition—"If ye abide;" but there is no "if" with regard to the consequence, "Ye are my disciples indeed." Abiding in Christ's Word in the sense indicated is real discipleship. It is not perfect, but true. The soul in Christ's Word is like a good seed in a good soil, ever growing up in and unto him.

II. IN ITS BLESSED RESULTS. There are: 1. *Knowledge of the truth.* (1) There is the *highest knowledge*—the truth. There are many truths, but this is *the truth.* This truth means the great facts of human redemption through Jesus Christ. We need not enumerate them; they will naturally occur to each in their magnitude, beauty, and order. They are various, yet one, constituting one Divine system of salvation. This is the truth made known by Christ, and to know this is the highest knowledge attainable by man, because it pertains to his spiritual nature, and involves his highest good. It is the most necessary and valuable. (2) It is a *most reliable knowledge.* Taught by the highest authority, the Son of God, the source, the centre, the natural expression, and the fulness of all redemptive truths; in fact, the truth itself. It is communicated in the most direct, absolute, attractive, and convincing manner—in the life, example, teaching, testimony, and miracles of the Son of God in human nature. (3) This knowledge of the truth is *experimental.* It is not merely outward and intellectual, but inward and spiritual; not as illustrated in others, but as experienced by the soul itself. Know the truth as the liberated captives know the blessings of freedom, as the restored sick know the benefit of health. Spiritual truth can only be absolutely known by the spiritual nature and experience. Its kingdom is within, and the true disciple has the witness in himself. (4) This knowledge of the truth is the *natural result of true Christian discipleship.* "Ye are my disciples indeed, and ye shall," etc. The truth can only be known by the true disciple. Pilate asked, "What is truth?" He had no reply; he had not an eye to see it, nor a heart to receive it. Knowledge of the truth is alone the privilege of the disciple indeed. 2. *Spiritual freedom.* (1) Freedom from *sin.* From its bondage, its control, its consequences, its guilt, and from sin itself. In the true disciple sin will be ultimately effaced, not a vestige of it will be left behind. (2) Freedom from *the Law.* From its curse, penalties, terrors, its heavy and unbearable burdens. The known truth, or Christ, becomes the law of the disciple's life, written on his heart. Its letter becomes dead, while its spirit is preserved. (3) Freedom from *the tyranny of self.* From the lower passions and appetites, from the captivity of self-seeking. The soul is brought out from itself into Christ, to breathe the natural and pure air of spiritual life, love, holiness, self-sacrifice, and willingness. (4) *This freedom*

is effected by the truth. (a) The truth is the efficient means of spiritual freedom. It is based on and produced by the great facts of redemption. (b) The truth is the efficient incentive to spiritual freedom. The revelation of sin, in its enormity, debasing effects, and ultimate consequences, and the revelation of God's loving, costly, and self-sacrificing provisions for sinners, are calculated to inspire the captive soul to struggle for and accept the offered liberty. (c) The truth experimentally known brings the fact of spiritual freedom to the consciousness. No sooner the facts of redemption, such as justification, forgiveness, and reconciliation by faith, are experimentally known than the soul begins to realize in itself the blessings of spiritual freedom. Christ lives in the disciple's consciousness, and he feels that he is a subject of the spiritual empire and a free-born citizen of the new Jerusalem.

LESSONS. 1. *The weakest faith has the sympathy and care of Jesus.* The faith of these Jews was very weak and imperfect, hence this address to them. He despised not the day of small things—"A bruised reed shall he not break," etc. 2. *The weakest faith by continuance in Christ's Word will reach perfection.* "If ye abide," etc. The quality of faith at first is more important than quantity; quantity will follow. Spiritual millionaires commenced with a very little capital. The apostles properly addressed as, "Ye of little faith." Lean sheep thrive in green pastures. It is surprising how a weak faith is improved and strengthened in the society and under the tuition of Jesus. 3. *The weakest faith by abiding in Christ's Word shall enjoy the richest blessings.* We say—Know all first, and then believe. But the Christian order is rather—Believe first, and then know. The little knowledge required to precede faith is nothing to that which follows. It leads to true discipleship, and to the highest knowledge—the knowledge of the truth. It opens the door of the temple of redemptive truth, and thus opens the portals of eternal freedom. Ignorance is captivity, knowledge is liberty. Let the scientific facts of the world be known, and men will be intellectually free; let the Divine facts of redemption be experimentally realized, and men shall walk in the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—B. T.

Vers. 33—36.—*True freedom.* I. TRUE FREEDOM INVOLVES THAT OF THE SOUL. 1. *A man may be physically free without being free indeed.* 2. *A man may be socially free without being free indeed.* He may be in the full enjoyment of social and political privileges and yet a captive. 3. *A man may be mentally free without being free indeed.* His intellect may be sound and grasping, his mental vision clear and far-reaching, and still be a prisoner. 4. *True freedom involves that of the soul.* For: (1) *The soul is the highest part of man*—that which makes him a moral being and immortal, and connects him immediately with God and his government, and with spiritual existence generally. (2) *His highest nature must be free ere he can be free indeed.* He may be physically bound and be really free, but if the soul, the spiritual nature, be in bondage, it affects his whole being.

II. TRUE FREEDOM INVOLVES THAT OF THE SOUL FROM SIN. 1. *Sin makes the soul captive to the Divine Law.* Sin is a transgression of Divine Law, and must be punished. "The wages of sin is death." The sinful soul is under the just condemnation of the Law and the displeasure of the Lawgiver, a prisoner of the Law and justice. 2. *Sin makes the soul captive to itself.* "Whosoever committeth sin," etc. In the degree a man is under the control of sin, he is its slave. Sin enslaves the soul. (1) *It dims its spiritual vision.* Cannot see into the invisible and eternal. (2) *It vitiates its spiritual taste.* Cannot relish spiritual food. (3) *It cramps and destroys its spiritual aspirations and capacities.* Its wings are clipped by sin so that it cannot and will not fly aloft into its native air. (4) *It debars the soul from its spiritual rights and privileges.* The peace and friendship of God, and the society of the good and pure. 3. *All souls by nature are in the bondage of sin.* (1) *Some are unconscious of it,* like these Jews—a sad condition. (2) *Some are conscious of it*—a more hopeful state. (3) *Whether conscious or unconscious of it, the fact remains.* The soul by nature is the slave of sin and in the bondage of corruption. 4. *In order to be truly free, the soul must be liberated from sin.* A state of wilful sin is a state of willing captivity, and deliverance from it is essential to true freedom.

III. TRUE FREEDOM OF THE SOUL FROM SIN IS EFFECTED BY CHRIST. 1. *He can liberate the soul from sin.* (1) He has power to pardon sin. Without this the soul

cannot be made free. The sense of past guilt must be effaced, and a way of escape must be opened. This has been done by Christ in his self-sacrificing and vicarious life and death. In him Divine forgiveness is a glorious fact, and "he has power on earth," etc. (2) He has power to separate the soul from sin. This is done by the creation of a new life—spiritual and Divine life. Christ by faith lives in the soul, so that the believer is made like Christ, the Son of God, and between him and sin there is an ever-widening gulf. He is in a new world—the world of love and purity, the world of spiritual joy and freedom. (3) Christ alone has power to do this. He alone is free from sin, and he alone can make the soul free from it. He alone is divinely commissioned to do this; he is the only spiritual Liberator of the human race. 2. *The freedom effected by Christ is most real.* (1) It is effected by the highest authority. By the eternal Son. From him there is no court of appeal; his decision is final. "If God be for us," etc.; "If the Son shall make you free," etc. (2) The freedom is effected in the most satisfactory manner. If God is satisfied and man willingly consents, this is enough. No consideration nor apology is due to Satan; he is a tyrant, a usurper, and a thief, and has no right to the property. Let the Divine government be satisfied in the soul's freedom, and it is real. In Christ this is gloriously the case. "God is just, and Justifier," etc. (3) The freedom is most thorough and comprehensive. It is spiritual, the freedom of the soul from all evil and its admission to all good, "from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom," etc. It involves the restoration of the soul into its original state and right, and is no more in harmony with God's will than with the soul's true nature and aspirations, and is well calculated to promote its highest development and eternal happiness. (4) This freedom is permanent. No freedom that is temporary is true. The servants of sin are only tolerated; they must be excluded from the Father's house and its privileges sooner or later. But the freedom effected by Christ is that of sonship. All made free by Christ become the sons of God, and like Christ are entitled to remain in the house for ever. Their freedom is as permanent as the soul, as the existence of the great Liberator, and between them and captivity there will ever be a progressively holy nature and the infinite power of the eternal Son.

LESSONS. 1. *The importance of having right views of freedom.* False views on this subject are so prevalent; we are so prone to make mistakes on this. They are so dangerous. 2. *The importance of having right views of the enslaving influence of sin.* Without this we cannot obtain true liberty. So important is this that Christ calls special attention to it: "Verily, verily," etc. 3. *The importance of obtaining true freedom.* Man is so prone to be satisfied with false freedom, to be self-deceived. True freedom is the only one worth having. 4. *The importance of being made free by Christ.* He alone can make us free. 5. *The duty of gratitude to him.* He is the great Liberator of humanity. Those who are made free indeed should be indeed thankful. A view of Christ as the Liberator will make heaven all ablaze with gratitude—ought to make earth.—B. T.

VERS. 41—47.—*True spiritual paternity.* Notice—

I. THEIR MISTAKEN SPIRITUAL PATERNITY. "We have one Father, even God." This in a sense is true. (1) God was their Father as creatures; (2) he was their Father as a nation; (3) he was their Father still in his yearning love to save and pity them. But it is substantially hollow and false, as proved by their conduct towards Christ. 1. *They failed to recognize his connection with God.* (1) He was the Son of God. "I came forth out of God." He was, in fact, God's Son, as evidenced by his person and miracles. (2) He was come on a Divine mission. Come to them, and come on a mission of love and salvation. (3) He was divinely sent. "Neither came I of myself, but he sent me"—he whom you call your Father. 2. *They failed to understand his message.* Although (1) he spoke with Divine authority; (2) with Divine simplicity; (3) with Divine importunity and tenderness, so that he could naturally ask the pretended children of God, "Why do ye not understand my speech?" 3. *They failed to believe him and his message.* Although: (1) His character was perfect. "Which of you," etc.? (2) His message was truthful. He could challenge them with regard to the truthfulness of his message, as well as the perfection of his character, and both deserved and demanded attention and faith. (3) Yet they disbelieved and rejected

him for the very reason which should induce them to believe and accept him. "Because I tell you the truth, ye," etc. 4. *These sad failures flatly contradict their pretended relationship to God.* (Vers. 42—47.)

II. THEIR TRUE SPIRITUAL PATERNITY. "Ye are of your father," etc. Look at the picture of the father and the children and their likeness. 1. *Look at his murderous propensities.* (1) The devil is a murderer. The murderer of human bodies and souls; the destroyer of human happiness and the Divine image in man. The Jewish nation bore this character. From time to time they manifested murderous propensities; they became the murderers of the Messiah, the Son of God and the Lord of glory. (2) The devil was a murderer from the beginning. Not the beginning of all things, nor even the very beginning of his own existence, but the beginning of the human race. His fall preceded that of man, and perhaps the existence of man; but no sooner had he perceived Adam, young, innocent, and loyal in his happy paradise, than the lust of murder was excited in his breast, and he fixed upon man as his victim, and effected his foul purpose in the spiritual murder of our first parents. This was the character of the Jews from the beginning, and the character of these very persons since the beginning of Christ's earthly existence. No sooner had the second Adam appeared on the scene than they sought by every means to kill him. (3) The devil is a most selfish and wilful murderer. This was the case with regard to our first parents. There was no provocation, no gain beyond the gratification of his own selfishness and malice. This was the case with these Jews in the murder of their Messiah; they could find no reason for it but in their own dark and selfish hatred. 2. *Look at his lying propensities.* (1) The devil is a liar. He is opposed to truth, to all truth, especially to the great system of truth brought to light by Christ. Thus his falsehood serves well his murderous opposition to the redeeming truth of the gospel. In this the heads of the Jewish nation resembled him; they murderously opposed Jesus, and lie came to help murder; they bore false witness against him. (2) The devil became a liar by falling from the truth. He was in the truth once and the truth in him, but abode not in it long enough to be morally safe. He fell wilfully, of his own accord. He is a backslider, and, having fallen from truth, he had no place to fall but into the whirlpool of falsehood, with all its concomitant vices. How like their spiritual father were the Jewish nation! They were born into great religious privileges, they had eminent spiritual fathers, brought up under the watchful care and in the tender lap of a kind Providence, nursed on the breast of Divine and precious promises, and familiarized with the idea of a coming Messiah, their Divine Deliverer; but they abode not in the truth, but wilfully fell into falsehood. It seems as if only the children of special light alone are capable of becoming the veritable children of the prince of darkness. (3) The devil as a liar is most complete. "There is no truth in him." He is completely lost to truth, and truth to him; there is not a vestige of it in his nature. It is so completely gone, that eternal hatred of it now sits on its old throne, and the very thought of it is repugnant and unbearable. In this how like their father these children were! Jesus appealed to every sentiment of virtue and affection in their breast, but in vain. He exhibited in his life and character all that is attractive in human nature, and all that is mighty and benevolent in the Divine; but all this not only did not excite their admiration and gratitude, but excited their most deadly hatred, which proves the sad hollowness and falsity of their character. There was no truth in them. (4) The devil as a liar is terribly original. "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own," etc. It is not a passing impulse, the result of temptation, but the natural outflow, and a part and parcel of his nature. Here the problem of the existence of evil is somewhat solved; we have found its father, its original propagator. His children partake of his spiritual nature, otherwise they would not be his children. The days of repentance, struggle, resistance, and prayer are past; these are days of spiritual generation, and in this case the result is a progeny of the devil. These Jews were more than under his influence; they were his progeny. Terribly original, self-responsible, voluntary, independent and complacent in their sin, they spoke of their own; their falsehoods were their own, and their murderous act was especially their own, the outflow of their evil nature. "Let his blood be upon us," etc. The father of murder has not finished with any one till that one carries on business on his own footing, manufactures his own goods and disposes of them at his own risk, and does all this naturally. Then

his paternity is complete, the relationship real, and his possession safe. This is the lowest point of moral deterioration reached in this world.

**LESSONS.** 1. *Man in this world is capable of the highest and the lowest spiritual affinities.* He may partake of the Divine or a devilish nature, may become the child of God or the child of the devil. Truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made. 2. *Man in this world is capable of the most serious self-deception with regard to his spiritual paternity.* These Jews thought that they were the children of God, while they were really the children of the devil. Such a self-deception is very characteristic of him, whose chief delight is to lie and deceive, and is perhaps the climax of his evil genius with regard to men. He cares but little about the name, only let him have the game. Of all self-deceptions this is the most miserable and disappointing! 3. *No one can claim God as his Father who despises and rejects his Son.* Our conduct towards him and his gospel decides our spiritual fatherhood at once. 4. *To Christ our spiritual paternity is quite evident, which he will reveal sooner or later.* And in the light of his revelation this is not difficult for each to know for himself. 5. *Nothing can explain the conduct of some men towards Christ and his gospel but a true statement of their spiritual paternity.* Let this be known, and the sequel is plain. 6. *Even the children of the devil condemn him, for they do not like to own him as their father.* State the fact, they are insulted. The alliance must be unholy and unnatural. Many of them claim God as their Father—the compliment of vice to virtue. A compulsory admission and a full realization of this relationship will be painful in the extreme. 7. *Let his children remember that they are such by their own choice.* For spiritual generation, for good or evil, is by and through the will. It is not fate, but deliberate and voluntary selection. "His lusts it is your will to do." All are either the children of God or of the devil by their own choice. Hence the importance of a wise choice.—B. T.

**Vers. 54—59.—Christ and Abraham.** "Whom makest thou thyself?" In answer to this question and to the objections made by his opponents, our Lord further reveals himself.

**I. IN RELATION TO THE FATHER.** 1. *His entire devotion to him.* This includes: (1) *His perfect knowledge of him.* "I know him." His knowledge of the Father was essential, absolute, and most intimate. It was not merely knowledge which he had gathered in the past, but which he derived and possessed in the present, then, on account of his oneness with him. (2) *His faithful confession of him.* "I know him." He confessed him before men; did not hide the knowledge he possessed of the Father, but faithfully declared it. (3) *His thorough obedience to his will.* "I keep his saying." His saying was his will expressed in and to Christ. The Father's saying was Jesus' message; this he faithfully kept and devotedly published. He swerved not from his Father's command on account of the most menacing threats of his foes, but most minutely and enthusiastically carried it out. 2. *Some of the features of his peculiar honour.* (1) *The honour of absolute self-denial and self-forgetfulness.* He honoured not himself, but made himself of no reputation. (2) *The honour of the most devoted loyalty.* (3) *Honour derived from the highest source.* It was not self-sought, self-derived, nor self-conferred. This honour, he says, would be worthless. "My Father honoureth me." He was really what his Father made him, and he made him what he was because of his essential dignity and relationship and his official integrity and devotion. 3. *His entire contrast with his foes.* (1) *They were ignorant of him whom they called their God.* "Ye have not known him." In spite of their great advantages, these had been lost on them. Christ knew him absolutely, and manifested and proved his knowledge. (2) *They were utterly false.* They were liars—false to themselves, to Jesus, and to God. Christ was true to all. He was the faithful and true Witness. (3) *Their claimed relationship to God was an empty boast.* It was disproved by their spirit, language, actions, and whole conduct. Christ's relationship to God was real. His Sonship was most conclusively proved by his Divine knowledge, his public ministry, his Divine miracles, by his whole life.

**II. IN HIS RELATION TO ABRAHAM, AND ABRAHAM TO HIM.** These Jews claimed Abraham as their father, and attempted to cause a discord between him and Christ; but he reveals himself in relation to the patriarch. 1. *In relation to his highest interest.* (1) *The incarnate life of Jesus engaged the patriarch's most rapturous attention.*

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." The incarnate life of Jesus was revealed to him in the promise which God repeatedly made to him. This excited his interest, and became the subject of his ardent study. He meditated on it with delight, raised himself, as it were, on tiptoe to look over the shoulders of ages to catch a glimpse of it; stretched forward with eagerness and joy to behold it; made use of every light, and earnestly prayed for more. (2) *A vision of his incarnate life was granted him.* "And he saw it." His faithful efforts met with success, and his eager faith was rewarded with the desired vision. Whether this refers to the general vision of his life of faith, or to some special one, is not certain. Perhaps it was specially enjoyed on the summit of Moriah, and through his own experience in offering up his only son he had a special vision of the incarnate life of the Son of God. This served as a telescope through which he saw the distant day close at hand, and beheld its leading features, and grasped its Divine and human bearings and import. (3) *This vision filled his soul with joy.* "He saw it, and was glad." Being the chief vision of his life, his soul overflowed with delight and gladness. His was the joy of overflowing gratitude, intense satisfaction, and Divine fulfilment. Since he saw that day his joy was in his soul, a springtide which carried him at last to the brighter visions and diviner joy beyond. 2. *In relation to Abraham's age.* "Before Abraham," etc. This implies: (1) *The priority of his being.* It was very little for him to say that he was before Abraham, considered in the full light of his statement, but it was a step in the right direction, and a reply to the objection of his opponents. (2) *The eternity of his being.* "I am." "I was" here would place him among created beings, but "I am" at once reveals him as uncreated, eternal, self-existent, and independent of time and material conditions and circumstances, and makes him belong to the highest order of being. (3) *The unchangeability of his being.* "I am." In time, and amid the changes of his visible and earthly existence, his eternal personality and consciousness are preserved unchanged. He is still the "I am." (4) *His unquestionable Divinity.* If his being is uncreated, eternal, self-existent, and unchangeable, he must be Divine. This he most emphatically and solemnly asserts: "Verily, verily," etc.

III. HIS REVELATION OF HIMSELF IN RELATION TO HIS OPPONENTS. 1. *They understood it.* It was intellectually intelligible to them. They were too acquainted with the attributes and designations of Jehovah to misunderstand the language of Christ, and their application to himself was felt by them, as their conduct proves. 2. *It became to them unbearable.* "They took up stones," etc. A proof of: (1) *Inability to refute his statement.* When stone-throwing begins, arguments are at an end. Stone-throwing is a sign of weakness. (2) *Inability to be convinced.* Their false and malicious nature was patent against conviction. They could not rise to the Divinity of his Person and mission. This inability was sad, but wilful and criminal. (3) *Inability to control themselves.* Passion was their master; hatred was on the throne. They fail to conceal them. 3. *It widened the gulf between him and them.* It was wide before—wider now. As he revealed himself in the sublimest manner as their promised Messiah and the Son of God, they in consequence revealed themselves in stone-throwing as his most implacable and deadly foes. 4. *His revelation was suitably appended by his apparently miraculous escape.* "But Jesus hid himself," etc. Hid himself in the folds of his glory. A suitable sequel to his revelation of himself as their Divine Deliverer. How easily and effectively could he defend himself, and retaliate in their fashion! But he preferred his own. He had a royal road. He departed as a King. He could walk through the crowd unobserved, and through the stones unhurt. The weak are more ready to attack than the strong, but there is more majesty in the retreat of the strong than in the attack of the weak. When stone-throwing begins, it is time for the messenger of peace to retire. The stones may kill his person, but cannot kill his published message, and he may be wanted elsewhere.

LESSONS. 1. *Natural relationships often survive the spiritual.* The natural relationship between these people and Abraham, and even between them and God, still remained, while the spiritual was all but gone. This is true of God and evil spirits. 2. *When the spiritual relationship is destroyed, the natural availeth nothing.* It is only the foundation of an empty boast and hypocritical self-righteousness, and at last the source of painful reminiscences and contrasts. 3. *The best of fathers often have the worst of children.* This is true of Abraham, and even of God—the best Father of all.

4. *Much of the religious capital of the present is derived entirely from the past.* Many claim relationship with, and boast of, the reformers and illustrious men of bygone ages, and this is all their stock-in-trade. Their names are on their lips, while their principles are under their feet. 5. *It was the chief mission of Christ to explain and establish the spiritual relationship between man and God.* To establish it on a sound basis—the basis of faith, obedience, and love. To be the real children of God and of our pious ancestors, we must partake of their spiritual nature and principles. This Jesus taught with fidelity, although it cost him at last a cruel cross. 6. *We are indirectly indebted to the cavils of foes for some of the sublimest revelations of Jesus of himself.* It was so here. Their foul blasphemies, after all, served as advantageous backgrounds to his grand pictures of incarnate Divinity and love; so that we are not altogether sorry that they called him a “Samaritan” and a demon, as in consequence he shines forth with peculiar brilliancy as the Friend of sinners, the Son of God, and the Saviour of mankind.—B. T.

Vers. 1—23.—*Excluded from the destination of Jesus.* In one sense Jesus was very near to men, very closely connected with them. At the same time he was very far from them, separated in many ways. The Gospel of John abounds in indications of this felt difference and superiority. Yet there is much to help and cheer even in words like these: “Whither I go, ye cannot come.” The truth of Jesus is the same, spoken to friends or to enemies, and everything Jesus said on the earth has something of gospel in it. If we are born again and take shape after the new creature, then we also shall be from above.

I. THE DESTINATION THAT JESUS HIMSELF ASSUREDLY WILL REACH. Jesus is on a definite journey, knows where he is going, and that he will get there. His life is not an aimless wandering. In all his goings backwards and forwards between Galilee and Judæa his face was set towards Jerusalem, because there for him the door was to open from the seen to the unseen, from the life of time to the life of eternity. His enemies speak of him as if his thoughts were running in the same direction as those of Job. When Job sat among the ashes, despoiled of his property, bereaved of his children, smitten with pain all over the body, he thought death and the grave his best friends, where the wicked would cease from troubling and the weary be at rest. But Jesus was thinking of what he would *attain*, not what he would *escape*. The heavenly state, with its security, glory, and blessedness, was not an unexpected thing to Jesus. Jesus speaks as knowing for himself that the end depends on the way. Jesus knows where he is going, for he has been there already. In the autumn of 1492 three Spanish ships are making their way over the Atlantic, in waters where ship has never been known to pass before. Christopher Columbus of Genoa commands those ships, and he is going on an enterprise of pure faith. He believes there is a land ahead, but he has never been there. At present thousands go over that same Atlantic, *returning home*. And so Jesus was going back whence he had come. Every step took him nearer that day when he would pray the prayer, “Glorify thou me with thine own self, with that glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

II. THE DESTINATION THAT SOME MOST CERTAINLY WILL NOT REACH. Most of the listeners would trouble very little about what Jesus meant. They would say, “Let him go, or let him stay; it is no great concern of ours.” But if *we* do really believe that Jesus has gone into a state of glory, that he individually can no longer suffer pain, no longer be exposed to temptation, must it not be serious for us to reflect that possibly we cannot go where he has gone? Heaven is not to be earth over again. The mixtures and conflicts of the lower world are not to be known in the upper one. Good people have no monopoly of transit to any place on the face of the earth; but there is a state to which the evil cannot reach. A man may say, if he likes, that he will have a garden without weeds, but that will not keep the weeds out. But Jesus is the great and effectual Excluder. Beyond the veil there are divisions more intense and more manifest than any that obtain here. Jesus came amid the unions of time to make the separations of eternity.

III. THE DESTINATION THAT ALL MAY REACH. Speaking of exclusion is the strange work of Jesus. Even while he said, “Ye cannot come,” at the same time he said, “Come.” Any one can come who will enter in at the strait gate and tread the narrow

way. Any one can come who will give the seed-ground of his heart as good ground for the seed of eternal truth.—Y.

**Ver. 12.—*The Light of the world.*** We shall hardly be wrong in assuming that Jesus said these words in the full warmth and radiance of a most sunshiny day. Surely the sun speaks so every day in his rising, "I am the light of the world." Sometimes he says it more emphatically. More emphatically in summer than in winter, more emphatically on a bright day than a cloudy one, but always saying it afresh every morning with the return of daylight to the earth. Jesus means that just as the sun gives light to the world in one way, so he gives light in another. When the light of the Lord Jesus Christ comes in all its fulness, then the night passes from our life. There is a darkness that is not banished with the dawn, unless Jesus banishes it; and if Jesus stays with us, then there is a light that will not vanish with the sunset. In him we get securities, comforts, and opportunities, such as make us independent of unfavourable times and seasons. Take this declaration in connection—

**I. WITH SAFETY.** Night is the time of danger. The thief comes by night. Daylight gives a freedom of movement which at once ceases with the darkness. So he who is the true Light of the world brings a safety that is impossible without him. Who can tell into what depths of destruction and misery they plunge who refuse the light of the Lord Jesus? After all, the only real destruction is self-destruction. When Jesus lodges the light of his truth in our hearts, then our notions of danger get turned upside down. So it was with the jailor of Philippi. Jesus shows to us spiritual peril and saves us from it. To any one who has clearly seen what a terrible thing spiritual peril is, and what a real thing spiritual salvation is, how absurd and exaggerated much of the world's prudence must appear. The moment Christ begins to rise upon the heart, spiritual danger and spiritual salvation will cease to be mere words. All spiritually anxious ones are where they are just because Jesus is the Light of the world. None can tell into what light he may be travelling. To see one's peril is half one's salvation.

**II. WITH HUMAN IGNORANCE.** What can a man know of the scene round him in the dark? Take him to some elevation from which in daylight there is a spacious and charming prospect, and he is none the better. But what a change a few short hours will make—a change going all the way from ignorance to knowledge! Visible objects are not properly known till seen in daylight. In the light that streams from Jesus how different we seem to ourselves! The duties, the possibilities, and the associations of life become altogether different. Life is as full of interest as ever, yea, fuller; but we are interested in different things, or in old things in a different way. No one knows so much of permanent and comforting value as the Christian.

**III. WITH PRACTICAL PERPLEXITIES.** Many have made great mistakes in life, and had to go through toils and trials they might well have been spared, if only they had been practical Christians, completely at the disposal of the Lord Jesus. Jesus knows well what poor guesses we can make at consequences and probabilities. He who claims to rule us will never leave us in doubt as to what we are really to do. The continuance of serious perplexity comes not from want of light, but want of disposition to make use of the light.

**IV. WITH WORK.** "The night cometh, when no man can work." Jesus gives the light whereby we may be useful down to the very end of our present life. Jesus must show how best to employ our time, how best to serve the world. Never yet did true Christian look back on wasted life. The miserable retrospects, the terrible confessions, belonging to the men of this world are not his.—Y.

**Ver. 31.—*Genuine discipleship.*** In the earlier part of his ministry Jesus probably had a great many disciples. At all events this might be suspected. He taught a great deal, and the testimony is that he spoke "with authority, and not as the scribes." We may be sure he was always ready to speak concerning the things of the kingdom of heaven. In synagogue, in temple, in the homes of the people, out in the open air, he lost no opportunity. He that soweth sparingly, reapeth sparingly. Thus a large company of nominal disciples would be gathered. But Jesus did not care for mere quantify as such. He was quite prepared for desertions and backslidings. Only a



hundred and twenty were gathered in the upper room to wait for the Day of Pentecost.

**I. THE DIFFICULTY OF DISCIPLESHIP.** Nominal Christianity is easy enough, but to be a real disciple is as hard as ever. Jesus made it hard for those who first thronged round him, and the same tests, the same requirements, the same difficulties, face us still. The would-be disciple has to contend with his own indolence, impatience, self-indulgence. What changes in our thoughts and ways there must be, so that our thoughts may become as the thoughts of Jesus, our ways as the ways of Jesus! We are not to be known by distinctions in outward appearance, but by deep distinctions in character and purpose. He who wants an easy, smooth, level life will not indeed find it anywhere; least of all will he find it with Christ. It is not mere attendance at school that makes the scholar—it is learning; and in the school of Christ learning by practice.

**II. SEE JESUS TESTING DISCIPLES.** The man who said he would follow Jesus wherever he went. The man who said he would follow when he had buried his father. The man who said he would follow after saying farewell to his friends. The disciples in the storm, who deemed they trusted Christ, and yet could not trust him till they had awakened him from sleep. Faith in Jesus as a Teacher must rise above the difficulties of any particular single demand of his. You must learn to look at Jesus, not in any one single action, not in any one single word, but in the sum total of all his actions and all his words. Jesus is always teaching, and we have to be always learning. What others reckoned to be discipleship he did not so reckon. Departure from old associations does not make discipleship. Departure into new circumstances does not make discipleship. He is the disciple indeed who breaks from an old life into a new one—into that new life which gets nearer perfectness the nearer it gets to perfect trust in Jesus. Diogenes went about Greece with his lantern, looking for an honest man; and so Jesus goes about among us with his tests and with his searching, undeceivable eye, looking for a disciple indeed. He looks to see whether we abide in his Word, whether we carry it into every thought, every transaction, every temptation, every trouble. He would lead us on from lesson to lesson, deepening our faith, marking us off as his disciples more and more distinctly—those ever learning and ever able to come more and more to knowledge of the truth.—Y.

**Ver. 32.—The liberating truth.** There are two kinds of freedom: the freedom of the liberated prisoner and the freedom of the manumitted slave. Living in a country like England, we are most likely to think of the former kind. But it is quite evident that Jesus was thinking of servitude rather than captivity. Many may have to be under restraint because they have broken laws; it is right that they should be prisoners for a time, perhaps even for all their lives. But servitude never can be right; it has had to remain awhile because of the hardness of men's hearts, and as men have got more light upon human equality, they have seen that no man should be legally compelled into the service of another, whether he would or not. In the time of Jesus there were many bond-slaves, and he had no magic process whereby he could liberate them. But there were bond-slaves besides, unconscious of their servitude, deluded with the notion that they were already free, and therefore all the harder to liberate. To such Jesus spoke here. He spoke to slaves, and told them what would liberate them.

**I. THE PROCESS OF LIBERATION MAY BE REAL, THOUGH FOR A WHILE WE ARE NOT CONSCIOUS OF IT.** The prisoner is free when no longer in prison; the slave is free when no longer under the legal control of his owner. But Christian liberty cannot thus be made up of negations; it would be a poor thing if it could. It is of no use to attempt a definition of Christian liberty; it is a thing into which we must grow. We must grow until, even as Paul did, we look back on the days once counted free as days of the worst servitude. Going where Christ wants us to go, being what Christ wants us to be, we shall see in due time what a real and blessed thing spiritual freedom is. Still, though it must be a time before we know this properly, yet we may know something of it at once in studying the very greatest illustration of real liberty we can find, namely, the Lord Jesus himself. It is not abstract truth that liberates, but truth as embodied in the wisdom and power of Jesus.

**II. TRUTH BRINGS US INTO THE LIBERTY OF DOING GOD'S WILL.** Christ's own liberty

was not that of doing as he liked. He went by the likings of his Father in heaven. He did nothing without liking to do it; yet he also did nothing just because he liked to do it. To desire what God desires, that is liberty, without a check, a jar, or a fret. Sowing just what we like, we shall certainly reap what we do not like. Christ wants to liberate us from the thralldom of our own strong, foolish desires. The psalmist exactly expresses the Christian's privilege and attainment, when he says so cheerfully, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

III. TRUTH BRINGS US INTO THE LIBERTY OF SEEING THINGS WITH OUR OWN EYES. The reputed wise in Jerusalem would only have led Jesus into a bondage of falsehoods and delusions. What a Pharisee they would have tried to make him! Really free-thinking is the only right thinking, and our Teacher was the freest thinker that ever lived. It is our duty as much as our right to judge everything in connection with Christ for ourselves. By that rule we shall be judged at last. Others may help us in the way when chosen, but they are not to choose it for us.

IV. TRUTH BRINGS US INTO THE LIBERTY OF A LOVING HEART. The heart of Jesus could not be kept within rules and precedents and prejudices. It was a Divine love, shed abroad in his heart, that kept him safe, pure, and unspotted, in a world abounding with things to pollute.

V. TRUTH BRINGS US INTO THE LIBERTY OF A GRACIOUS LIFE. That is, the liberty of Jesus never interfered with the true liberty of others, but increased and established it. He never broke away from the beaten track for the mere sake of doing it.—Y.



# HOMILETICAL INDEX

TO

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

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